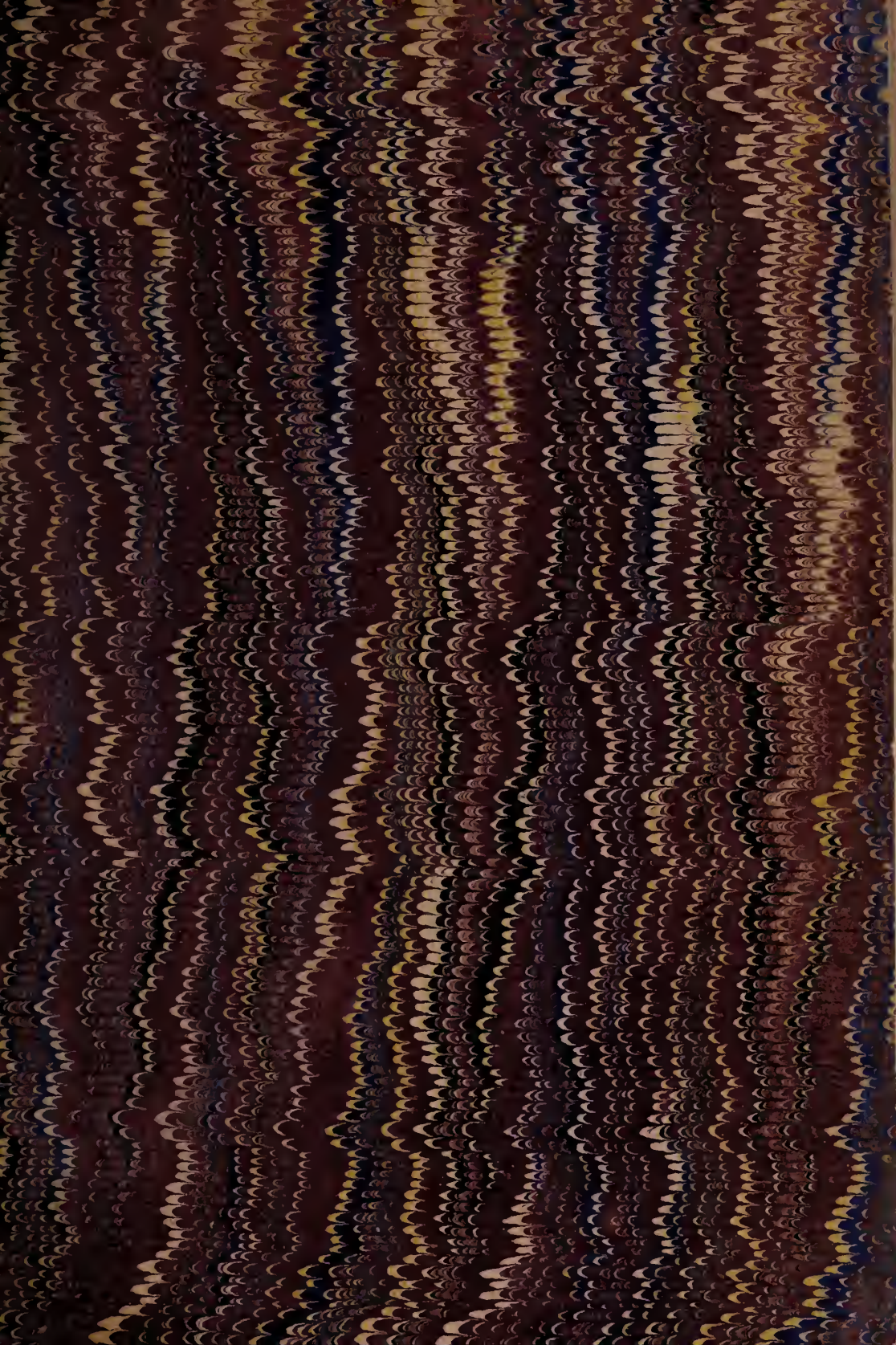



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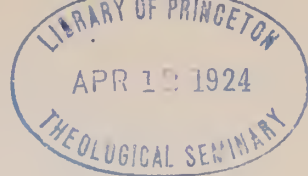
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P R I N C E T O N

R E V I E W .

Benj. B. Warfield

By Whom, all things; for Whom, all things.

1883

FIFTY-EIGHTH YEAR.

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NEW YORK.

1882.

JANUARY.

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DAVID A. WELLS, LL.D., D.C.L.

THE PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF LAND.

PERHAPS no one cause can be named, so deeply seated and widely influential, of the political unrest which has pervaded Europe for nearly a century, as the discontent of millions with existing systems of land tenure, and with the methods by which the soil is distributed to its cultivators. It was the foremost of the causes which began to convulse the French monarchy in 1789, and never ceased to convulse it till it was demolished down to its deepest foundations. That agitation rapidly extended itself over all Europe, and has continued ever since; and the world is witnessing its most recent effects in the disturbed condition of Ireland, and that dread of coming change in the great Russian Empire which fills all Christendom with awe.

In no other direction are the efforts of those who are agitating in the interest of communism and socialism half so earnest, half so plausible, or half so successful as in their attacks on the existing land tenures of the civilized world. This is precisely what we ought to expect; for here is the weakest point in modern civilization. These levellers show their sagacity—not their wisdom, for they have none—in attacking the social order which they wish to overthrow in its weakest places. The time has actually come when it is indispensable to the conservation of all which is precious in the institutions of society, that we should ascertain, by strictly scientific methods, what laws exist, in the nature of man and of things, by which it can be determined what are the rights of individuals and of society in respect to the possession of the soil from which the whole human race must derive the necessities of life. To indicate the answer to this inquiry is the object of this essay.

How is it that any human being becomes the owner of any-

thing outside of himself? In the beginning certainly one can lay exclusive claim to nothing but himself—his own soul and body. Every other man around him has the same right to every material substance that he has, and may use whatever he can lay his hand on as he pleases. How then can anything become the exclusive property of an individual? All will admit that he who puts forth his own powers to produce something becomes thereby its owner. Perhaps no intuition of the soul is simpler or more primitive than this. But no one can produce anything by such an exertion of his powers, unless he expends that effort upon some material thing. Accordingly a man selects some one of the numerous objects around him as best fitted to serve the end he has in view, and exerts his powers upon it till he has rendered it fit to subserve his ends and promote his happiness. If then he is the exclusive owner of the product of his own labor, he must in like manner have an exclusive right to that material substance on which that labor has been expended. As Mr. Locke said long ago, he has mingled his labor with the material substance, and must therefore own that with which it has become united. If any one denies this, he denies that one can in any way become the owner of any material substance, and even that one can in any practical sense own the products of his own labor; for he does not admit that one can own the only thing on which he can exert it. He puts himself on record as denying the right of private property altogether, and undertakes to maintain that any other man has just as good a right to enjoy the products of any man's labor as he has himself; for in no way can a man own the products of his own labor, except by owning that upon which that labor has been exerted.

This is of course said upon the presumption that the labor has been employed on a substance to which no other person had previously acquired a claim by labor bestowed. If one labors upon a substance to which such a claim has been previously established, he will not acquire ownership till he extinguishes that claim by an equivalent, to the satisfaction of the previous owner. It is only acquired by labor bestowed on that which before was free to all, whereby it has been rendered serviceable to human well-being as it was not before.

To this law land is equally subject as all other material things. The reason of the law holds in respect to land as truly as in respect to anything else. There are some substances which, under ordinary conditions, never are owned. Air and water are such. Yet when labor must be exerted to make water contribute to human use, when it must be obtained from wells dug deep in the earth, or carried to a distance from the source of supply, it just as naturally becomes the property of an individual as wheat or vegetables. It is not perhaps impossible to suppose a case in which a certain portion of the atmosphere has undergone modification by the application of labor to fit it for some special use; if so it would also become private property.

What may sometimes happen in respect to these two universal gifts of the Creator to all, in respect to land always does happen. It is precisely here that the opponents of the private ownership of land lay the whole stress of their argument. Land say they, as truly as air and water, is God's free gift to all alike, and therefore cannot be the exclusive property of any. It is also precisely here that their argument breaks down. Land never is found in its natural condition to be fit for human use. It must be prepared for cultivation by processes which are always laborious, and often exceedingly costly. The rank and useless growths of nature must be exterminated, channels for drainage must be opened, and it must be protected from the incursions of brute animals both wild and tame by suitable fences. Buildings must also be erected for the use of its cultivators. In this necessity is found the natural foundation for the private ownership of land. The Creator has given land to the human race under very different conditions from those under which he has given air and water.

One man conceives the idea of rendering his hunting¹ more successful by selecting suitable materials and constructing a bow and arrows, and owns the same because he exerted his powers in making them. Another believes that he can more easily supply his wants by making something grow out of the earth. He selects a piece of land which he thinks suitable for the purpose, at the cost of immense labor (because he has no suitable instruments to aid him in his work), he clears it of the forest

or the wild grass, digs the soil, and plants it with the seeds of those trees and plants which yield food for the sustenance of man. He also surrounds it with a fence for necessary protection of his crop, and builds upon it a permanent dwelling. He found this piece of land in a condition in which it could contribute nothing to his support; he has converted it into a most efficient means of procuring sustenance for himself and those dependent on him. On the same principle therefore upon which he who made the bow and arrows owns them, this man owns the land which he has rendered serviceable to human uses.

If it is objected to this that the productive power of the land is the free gift of God to all, the answer is, so were the natural qualities of the hickory withe and the strong bark of which the bow and string were made the free gift of the Creator to all, as truly as the productive powers of the land. One of these men has converted the natural qualities of the wood and the bark to the use of man; the other has done the same thing for the natural powers of the soil. Each has therefore equally become the owner of that upon which he has wrought. The same law covers both cases. The same law embraces the relation of all material substances to the labor of man.

It may perhaps be objected to the application of this law to land, that while other products of human industry wear out, land lasts forever, and therefore the ownership is perpetual. It is difficult to see how this could invalidate the argument, if it were true; but it is not true. Land once brought under cultivation will soon wear out, just like any other product of human industry, unless it is renewed by timely repairs. There are probably millions of acres even in our comparatively young country which, by the neglect of such repairs, were long ago worn out and abandoned, so that it would be far more difficult to bring them again into productiveness than it was originally to subdue them. All land is much like Rev. Sidney Smith's carriage which he called "The Immortal," because it had been repaired till nothing of the original structure remained, and by a continuance of the same treatment it would last forever. It would have been hard indeed if some leveller of the time had declared that the reverend gentleman was for that reason no longer the owner, and deprived him of it. In the common speech of the new settle-

ments, the man who prepares a piece of land for cultivation is said to "make a farm." The language is literally correct, and when it is made, unless it is successively renewed by timely repairs and improvements, it will as certainly wear out as the wagon or the plough, and almost as soon.

To this whole mode of arguing, Mr. Herbert Spencer objects as inconclusive and fallacious (Spencer's "Social Statics," p. 131; also *idem*, p. 144). He denies that any man can obtain an exclusive right to anything material by labor bestowed upon it to render it useful to man. The argument by which he endeavors to sustain this denial is, that every other human being has just as good a right to it as he has, and that consequently his bestowing labor upon it could not extinguish the right which any other man might have in it. That would remain in full force and validity. He denies that any man has any right to the wild berries he has picked, the wild game he has shot, or the wild fish he has caught, tho he has taken them from the depth of the ocean. By courtesy or for the sake of convenience, he is permitted to enjoy such spontaneous products as tho they were his; but he is in no proper sense the owner, and can become so only by obtaining the grant of the whole human race. Indeed he carries the doctrine much farther than this. He holds that there is but one way in which any individual can become the exclusive and permanent owner of anything. Society can grant no such ownership to any individual. It may lease land to the individual temporarily for a specified rent. Whatever remains to the individual after this rent is paid to society is his. He may transfer the ownership to whomsoever he will. This is Mr. Herbert Spencer's only foundation for the right of property in anything. Before the right of property can exist at all, society, the human race in its social capacity, must rent land to the individual for a consideration agreed upon between the individual and mankind. Then the lessee must have cultivated his farm, paid his rent, and found himself in possession of a surplus. That surplus was the individual property of this first tenant of society. Before that time private property did not exist in the world, and there can be no private property in the world now, which did not have its origin in such a contract of rent between the cultivator of the soil and the human race.

This whole system rests for its foundation on one single assumption: that every material substance is granted by the Creator, not to any individual man who might need it, and to whose very life it might be essential, but to every individual human being an equal right to every particle of matter in the world, so that no man could appropriate any particle of matter in air, earth, or sea to himself without violating the right of every individual human being except himself. We are expected to receive this as a self-evident proposition, obvious to all as soon as stated. This assumption is the one only foundation of Mr. Spencer's whole theory of property. Is it quite self-evident? Is it not indeed self-evidently erroneous? It sharply contradicts the spontaneous judgment of all men. He who picks up a gold coin among the dust of the street, while he believes that if any one can prove that it was dropped by accident from his pocket, that man's title is paramount; yet if no one can prove a superior claim, then it belongs to himself. The last thought which would occur to any man in such a case would be that the coin, failing the particular owner, belonged to society, and that therefore he must pay it over to some public treasury, representing the human race. It is not credible that such a view of the case would be taken by Mr. Spencer himself. The undoubting judgment of any man, peasant or philosopher, would be, that what belonged to no one else he had an undoubted right to use and enjoy. The same holds in respect to the spontaneous fruits of the earth. No one doubts that he has a right to gather them, and that when he has done so they are as much his as the products of the field which he has tilled. The intuitive judgment is that the natural gifts of God belong, not to every individual of the race in equal share, but to any individual who may need and desire them, in such a sense that the individual who plucks the fruit by doing so makes it exclusively his own. The only right which any other man had in it was the right to use and appropriate it before any one else had done so. That right he who has plucked it has cancelled.

The simple truth of the case is, that the idea of a joint ownership of the whole race in any material thing is the mere figment of a philosopher's brain. It is not what any unsophisticated mind understands by the proposition that the powers

of material things are free to all. The proposition is that one man has just as good a right as another to appropriate them by applying his labor to them. Mr. Spencer's notion of a joint ownership is a direct contradiction of the common-sense of mankind. Yet on this obviously unwarranted assumption he expects us to build the right of property for all civilized men. It seems to us that mankind will be very slow to accept such a doctrine, no matter how plausibly it may be taught.

Even if Mr. Spencer's notion of the joint ownership of all material things were true, so far is it from laying a foundation, as he claims, for the right of personal property, that it is utterly contradictory of any such right. His argument to prove that all private ownership of land is a violation of natural equity equally proves that any other private ownership of any property is so too. According to his view, society, mankind, can lease land to an individual for a given time and for a given consideration; and that when that consideration has been paid to society, the remaining products of the land belong to the lessee as an exclusive possession. This is according to him the only possible origin of all exclusive ownership. But how can this give exclusive ownership? What he bought of society was the temporary use of the productive powers of the soil; but from whence did he procure his right to the natural powers of the seed which he sowed? In every kernel of that seed every individual man, woman, and child had an equal right with himself. That right will descend to every grain of wheat which his farm will yield. It all then belongs to society just as much as the rent which he has paid for his land. If labor expended does not give him a right to that on which he has expended it, (and Mr. Spencer denies that it does), then every human being has the same right in every kernel of that wheat as he himself has. It was produced by those vegetative powers of nature exerted in long succession which are as free to work for all the rest of the human race as for him, and in the products of which every other human being has the same right as himself.

Nor is this all. Our supposition is that this was the first contract of rent ever made. Previous to that time there was no private property: everything was owned jointly by the whole race. Of course the materials of the axe used in clearing his

land, and all the implements employed in cultivating it, were the joint property of all men, and he can never own any of the products of the land which he has rented till he has compensated the whole race for these. Society therefore continues to be the joint owner of everything which his land produces. Thus this whole theory of private property falls to the ground, and nothing remains to mankind but the perpetual endurance of that barbarism in which the denial of the right of property must inevitably end.

It is probably unnecessary to proceed farther at this stage of the discussion with our examination of Mr. Spencer's theory. Its impracticability and absurdity will become more and more apparent as we proceed. He does not, after all, differ much from the other leading economic writers of the English school in respect to the nature of property in land. It is time to come to the consideration of an error in respect to this subject, which is nearly universal among English writers on economic science, and traces of which may be found in many American writers. The theory of rent generally accepted by the English school is that of Ricardo, according to which rent is a consideration for the use of land over and above the interest of the capital invested in its improvement. Henry Fawcett accepts this theory (*"Manual of Political Economy,"* p. 119), and constructs his whole treatise on landed property in accordance with it. Henry George, an American writer who follows the lead of Herbert Spencer in respect to the private ownership of land, adopts the same definition of rent (George's *"Progress and Poverty,"* p. 148), and employs it as the major premise of his argument to overthrow the whole system of private ownership of land. It is therefore greatly to our purpose to inquire whether this theory and definition of rent are true.

The foundation of this theory is, that in the beginning of the settlement of a country the best lands will bear no rent. Fawcett's statement is that they will only bear a nominal rent; but his argument is everywhere on the assumption that they will bear no rent. The reason assigned is that there is more land of the best quality than can be cultivated, and that consequently every one can have all the land he needs without rent. This assumption flatly contradicts the facts as they have been

exhibited in the whole history of new settlements in North America. Cases without number have fallen under our notice, in which two parcels of land of precisely equal natural fertility lay adjacent to each other, one of which was under cultivation and would readily command a rent of one third of the crop. The other was not cultivated and would bear no rent. In such circumstances, land cultivated without rent is just as chimerical as the Centaur in natural history. In all those new settlements rent is just as inevitable a factor in all agricultural arrangements as in England at the present day.

To this the advocate of Ricardo's theory replies, that this is just what the theory requires. On one of the tracts in question no labor has been expended, and therefore it will bear no rent. What the cultivator is willing to pay for the tract that is cultivated is not rent, but simply interest on the cost of bringing it into cultivation. But here his argument breaks down. If the law of the case were that in such circumstances the so-called rent of the land is just the interest of the capital invested in its improvement, then the nominal rent of the land ought to be just equal to the interest of that investment. This exactly contradicts well-known facts. If in such a case it was interest instead of rent which the cultivator pays, then the rent of newly cultivated land in the early settlements of Illinois should have been not less than five dollars per acre. This can be shown by figures. The cost of making a farm, as it was fitly called, was not less than ten dollars per acre. The rate of interest prevailing at that time was not less than 50 per cent per annum, and 75 per cent was often paid. No one well informed in the matter will be startled at this. A rate of interest varying from 50 to 75 per cent per annum is as natural in such new settlements as 6 per cent was in Massachusetts at the same time. This is proved by the whole history of our own new settlements, and those of the English colonies in Australia, New Zealand, and in other parts of the world. Nor do these high rates result in any peculiar degree from risk, but from the use of the money. If then it was interest on capital, not rent, which was paid for a new farm, the rent should not have been less than five dollars per acre. The fact was that it never exceeded two dollars per acre.

What is the true interpretation of these facts? Every one who made an outlay in the improvement of a farm knew well that the cultivator could not afford to pay a rent of more than two dollars. Yet the interest of the investment was five dollars per annum. Evidently the transaction had no reference to interest, but had for its object the acquisition of the land as a permanent possession. This was the only consideration which could have induced any one to make the outlay. The assured possession and use of the land for all the future, and this only, was regarded as an adequate compensation for it. When the investment had been made, the land-owners did not demand in the form of rent interest for their capital, for they knew well they could not get it; but only such rent as in the present state of the market they could get. The rent they could get sustained no fixed relation either to the cost of improving the farm or to the current rate of interest, but depended, just as in England at the present day, on the quantity of agricultural products the farm would yield, and on their price in the market. The consideration received for use was therefore from the first, not interest—to which it sustained no more relation than the price of a lady's bonnet does to its cost after the fashion has changed—but rent in the strictest sense of that term. All land does then, in direct contradiction of Ricardo's theory, bear rent as soon as it is cultivated, and the rate of rent depends at the very beginning of cultivation on the same factors as in the ripest stage of agriculture.

It is fundamental to a right understanding of the case, that we should distinctly recognize the truth that the permanent possession of the land is the only motive which is sufficient to induce men to prepare land for cultivation. Had the notions of some recent levellers prevailed in this country a hundred years ago and onwards, the fertile upper Mississippi valley would have been for the most part a wilderness till this day. It would have fared just as the lands held in common by Indian tribes have fared, remaining little tracts of wilderness in the midst of cultivation. It was a single consideration which put vigor into the arms of the hardy pioneers who felled the forests of Ohio and Indiana; that consideration was the inspiring thought that the land belonged to them and their children forever.

It is also a truth which, tho it has been for the most part quite overlooked in the discussion of this subject, is yet of essential importance, that, whatever may be true in rare and altogether exceptional cases, the general rule certainly is, that he who expends upon land the labor necessary to bring it into cultivation never does receive in the form of rent an amount sufficient to reimburse him for his original investment with current interest, together with what he is afterwards compelled to expend in repairs and additional improvements. In respect to those vast tracts of land which have been reclaimed from the wilderness within the last century, it is easy to demonstrate this by figures. For the illustration of the principle let us suppose that one of two capitalists had in the year 1825, in the fertile prairie region of Illinois, lent to a farmer at the then current rate of interest the sum of \$1600, to be employed by him in procuring from the government a farm of 160 acres, and preparing it for cultivation; and that he had kept his money, both interest accrued and principal at interest, for fifty years, or till the year 1875; receiving of course the rates of interest which were from time to time current. Let us also suppose that at the same time another capitalist had himself bought of the government a farm of 160 acres of equally fertile land, and in the purchase and in preparing it for cultivation invested the same sum of \$1600, and had rented his farm at the highest cash rates which the market would allow, till the same year 1875; and that he had availed himself of current rates of interest for investing his rents as fast as they were received. Which of these two men would be found at the end of fifty years to have made the most profitable investment?

Enough is known of the successive changes which have taken place in rents, rates of interest, and prices of land since 1825 to enable us to answer this question with a very near approximation to accuracy. Probably few lands in the world have required a less outlay to prepare them for cultivation than the rich prairie lands of Illinois. It is perfectly easy to show, by facts which are known with absolute certainty, that in that State two experiments conducted in the manner suggested in the preceding paragraph would have resulted immensely in favor of the money-lender rather than of the land-owner. In

fifty years the former would have accumulated an amount exceeding all which the latter would have received for rent, together with the market value of his farm in 1875, by a sum sufficient to buy the farm at the value in 1875. The calculation would lead us to this result, tho no account were taken of the sums which must in the mean time have been expended in repairs and additional improvements. These outlays would doubtless have amounted to more than the original investment.

There is no room for such calculations in such an essay as this. The means are, however, abundant for showing, by calculation founded on the most unquestionable data, that the outlays which have been made in this century in preparing new lands for cultivation have never yielded in rents the current interest on the original outlay, and the additional sums which have from time to time been demanded for repairs and improvements, and that rents never can in the future make up the deficiency. It is also equally demonstrable, from like data, that the present value of the land, making fair allowance for all rents received, cannot in any but the rarest and most exceptional cases amount to as much as it has cost for improvements, repairs, and equitable interest on the same.

What then? Has the labor and capital employed in bringing all these lands into cultivation been an unprofitable investment? A pecuniary loss to our country and to mankind? By no means. It is indeed true that the man who made a farm and relied on being remunerated for his outlay from rents has largely lost money. But the man who by his own sturdy strokes prepared the land for tillage, and has used it as the instrument by which he has exerted his own industry, skill, and business talents, has found it not only a means of living, but in many cases a source of affluence and even of wealth. I believe we owe to Franklin the proverb that

"He that by the plough would thrive,
Himself must either hold or drive."

He that would grow rich by land must cultivate it himself. This and this only is the source of the immense wealth which within the century now nearing its close has come to this country from the improvement of new lands.

There is indeed a way in which wealth is accumulated from what is called rent, tho it is hardly worthy of the name. The proprietor, instead of a cash rent, receives a certain share of the crop. This he uses in raising beef, pork, or other animal products, or horses, mules, or other domestic animals for the market. It is obvious that his profits are not derived chiefly from his rent, but from the use of his own labor, skill, and business talents. This of course raises no objection to the argument of the preceding paragraphs. It is also worthy of remark that the new portions of Minnesota and the Territory of Dakota are coming into cultivation by processes hitherto untried, and an experiment is in progress which the premises of the previous argument do not contemplate. If it shall prove true that in those regions there is a soil which can produce crops of wheat in perpetual succession without change, then indeed a new era of agriculture is there to be originated for which our economics do not provide. But if it shall be found that a few successive crops of wheat will exhaust the humus which has been accumulated by ages of vegetable decay, rendering it necessary to resort to crops less remunerative than wheat, and to which the machinery for the cultivation of wheat is not adapted, then the conditions of the problem will be found to be not essentially different from those with which we have been familiar in all our previous history. The fact, however, that cultivation has been begun by rich capitalists does seem permanently to change one of the conditions which has been encountered elsewhere: the very high rates of interest may be avoided. It is yet too soon to form our judgment of this experiment.

In the preceding statements we have only taken into the account the outlays which have been made upon the land itself. But this is by no means a full account of the matter. The rent or the price which a given tract of land will command depends not entirely on its own improvements, but on the improved and civilized condition of the community in which it is situated, the condition of its roads, its bridges, its schools, its churches, in general, its civilization. To all this the proprietor of the farm in question has, in ways well-nigh innumerable, contributed. To have contributed in greater or less degree to the social progress of the community by the payment of taxes must have been

unavoidable, from the beginnings of civilization. The voluntary contributions of individual property-holders to this object are always of great importance, and all which a landed proprietor does in this way is to be reckoned as a part of the expense which he has incurred in bringing his land up to its present price either for rent or sale.

In respect to land situated in cities this consideration becomes of paramount importance. The high prices which land bears when situated in the heart of a great city does not necessarily belong to our subject; but as the same principles prevail here as in respect to land used for agriculture, it is not inappropriate to consider it. The demand which exists for such lands depends upon the investment of capital, and we apprehend no one who has ever reflected on the subject at all will for a moment entertain the thought that the present value of real estate in London, Paris, or New York would amount to as much as the capital expended in its improvement, and current interest on the same. One piece of ground may have contributed much more to the result than another, and it may not be possible to equalize them; but we may be quite certain that the present value of real estate in the city of New York is less than the capital expended in bringing its improvements to their present value, with current interest on them. Nothing justifies the vast investment but the use of the capital invested there as an instrument for the use and development of pre-eminent skill and business talent, just as in the case of improving land for the purposes of agriculture. This is the source of the vast profits which have been realized, and not the rent of the land on which the city is built. In order to estimate correctly the capital expended in bringing its lands to their present value, we must not only take account of the actual outlays made upon the lands which are held by individual proprietors, but all which the proprietors have contributed, either by taxation or voluntary gift, for the streets, squares, public buildings, and institutions of the city.

There is reason to believe that this argument holds with much greater force in respect to most other portions of the world than to those in the particular region to which it has been above applied. In very few instances in the world's his-

tory have lands been subdued under so favorable circumstances. The process has been assisted by many of the recent improvements in instruments and in the means of easy and cheap transportation. Who can at the present day form much idea of the cost of subduing the lands of our whole Atlantic slope? Most of those lands will never repay in rents the outlays which have been made upon them during the progress of the present century. We have founded our argument upon a portion of the landed property of the world which is more favorable to the landed proprietor than almost any other portion of the earth which could have been selected. Is not the conclusion then justified, that the definition of rent on which Ricardo's theory is founded and depends for its validity is erroneous? Rent is a factor in all agricultural transactions, from the very beginning of cultivation. No consideration is paid for the use of land over and above the interest of the capital invested in its improvement. We are on perfectly solid ground in maintaining, that as ownership is originally acquired by labor expended in preparing it for cultivation, so its value at any future time cannot exceed, either for sale or rent, the cost of its improvement. If this is so, Ricardo's theory of rent must be given up as having no foundation in the real nature of landed property, and as utterly delusive in its logical tendency.

This conclusion, so far from being an anomaly in economic science, conducts us to one of its grandest generalizations. In the beginning of this essay it was shown that there is but one way in which an individual can obtain the exclusive ownership of any material substance, and that in that general law land is embraced. At the point which we have now reached, we are prepared to enunciate the general proposition, that everything which is either bought or sold owes its exchangeable value to the labor which it costs to bring it to the condition in which it is offered for sale. Particular exceptions will occur in which it will be possible to procure for something offered for sale more than the labor which it has cost. A nugget of gold of great value may be found lying on the surface, and it may cost the finder nothing but to pick it up and transport it to a market. A particular mine may yield extraordinary returns for the labor expended in working it. A piece of land may be found which

can be prepared for cultivation with very little labor. But in all these cases the general law still holds. The exchangeable value of the property depends on the labor which it will ordinarily cost to bring similar property into a similar condition. The value of an ounce of gold does not depend on the labor expended on that particular nugget, or on metal taken from that particular mine, but on the labor which it will ordinarily cost to procure it. The price will take account not only of the cost of carrying that nugget to market, but of the months, perhaps years, which the finder, or others if not he, expended in fruitless "prospecting" for the precious metal. The price of an ounce of gold may vary temporarily with any temporary variation of the ratio of supply and demand. But in the long-run the price will depend on the labor it costs and on nothing else. As population and wealth increase, capital invested in land will become more productive, more capital will be invested in the production of food, and that which had been previously invested will yield a larger return. Lands which formerly would not yield enough to compensate the capitalist for the outlay necessary to subdue them will now be cultivated, and costly improvements will be made upon lands already under cultivation to render them more productive. Thus while the cost of food has increased, the cost of producing it has increased also.

Men do not, in the great exchange of the world's business, buy and sell the natural qualities and powers of the material things in which they deal, but the labor which has been bestowed upon them. All those natural qualities are the free gift of God, and under a free system of exchange they forever remain free. Men own the material on which they have wrought, but only that they may hold the labor which they have invested in it. The great natural law to which free competition brings all exchanges is, that an owner can obtain payment for his labor, but not for the natural qualities of the material things which he sells. They can no more be bought and sold than the waters of the ocean. This is just as true of land, provided it is subjected to perfect freedom of exchange, as of all other things. At bottom all exchanges are of labor for labor.

It is a striking confirmation of this view, that there are in the upper Mississippi valley large tracts of the best land in the

world which are at present entirely uncultivated, because their products would offer no inducement to any capitalist to expend his capital in reclaiming them. This will not always continue to be true. The time will at length come when a capitalist can reclaim these lands as cheaply as he can purchase other lands of equal productiveness. Then the rich bottoms of the Illinois and Mississippi will be cultivated. But all economic writers are agreed that the rent of any farm will always be less than the interest on the price at which it would be sold. Consequently it will be at the outset and will continue true, that the rent of that farm will be less than interest on the cost of its improvements. As cultivation goes on new outlays will become necessary, and no owner of that land will be able to realize from its rents the interest of the cost of the improvements. It will remain perhaps for ages the richest land on the continent, but its only value either for rent or sale will depend entirely upon the capital expended in its improvements. What would Mr. Spencer do with such a farm as this? Yet this farm differs in no important particular from any other. The only apparent difference lies in the fact that we know the history of this farm in respect to its improvements. Of other farms we cannot trace the particular steps of their cultivation.

Mr. Henry George urges with great power of statement, and to many readers plausibility of argument, that the natural productiveness of land is as truly the free gift of God to all men as the air or the water. So it is. Who can deny it? Why then, he argues, should any man be allowed to exact any compensation for its use, more than for the privilege of breathing the free air of heaven? If the definition of rent which we have been examining is to be accepted as a true account of the matter, how can any satisfactory answer to this argument be given? The only satisfactory answer that is possible is a denial of that definition and of all its consequences. No such consideration is or can be exacted. The nature of landed property forbids it. The consideration which men call rent is not payment for the use of the natural powers of the land, but for the labor invested in its improvement. For the most part, even in the case of the best lands and those which require the least outlay to prepare them for cultivation, that which is paid in the form

of rent falls far short of current interest on the cost of subduing them and keeping them in repair. If to this it is objected that, other things being equal, the rent of land will depend on its fertility, it is sufficient to ask in reply, To what purpose is this objection, when it is already plain that, even in the case of the best lands, the sum paid for use is less than interest on the cost of the investment? In every branch of business experience shows that some investments pay better than others. Why then should it be thought strange that a piece of good land should pay better than a piece of poor land?

The simple truth is that this theory of rent is founded on an assumption which is entirely chimerical, and therefore all the inferences derived from it are quite delusive. Among these is the inference of Mr. George that the private ownership of land is a wicked and oppressive monopoly. It is no more oppressive than the assumption that the savage that made the first bow and arrows owned them and had a right to use them for his own benefit. But while the most renowned writers on economic science in the English language adopt that theory, and use it as a premise in argument, it is not strange that such writers as Mr. George make eloquent and plausible attacks on the private ownership of land as unrighteous and oppressive. Why indeed should we confine our attention to a comparatively obscure though a very able writer? Let us hear Herbert Spencer (*"Social Statics,"* p. 142): "*Had* we to deal with the parties who originally robbed the human race of its heritage, we might make short work of the matter." Mr. George, after quoting this passage, adds: "Why not make short work of the matter anyhow? For this robbery is not like that of a horse or a sum of money, that ceases with the act." It is surely quite time this matter were looked into. If there is some natural law which justifies and necessitates the private ownership of land, so that he who first redeemed land from its natural wildness is in the nature of things its owner, it is not too soon to enunciate and defend that law, and give it its place among the immovable foundations of the social edifice.

It would be much to the purpose in view in this essay to examine the methods of legislation by which it is proposed to abolish "this monopoly of the private ownership of land," and

restore to long-injured humanity its rights. But we must resist the temptation to enter that field at present. This age has certainly furnished many specimens of the audacity of the spirit of reform, but none within our knowledge more startling than this. We must vindicate the natural right of the land-owner, or prepare for a revolution more sweeping and astounding than any which any civilized community ever yet experienced.

If the conclusions to which we have thus far come are sound, they settle the question of the tenure of land in such a country as ours on an immovable basis, quite removed from liability to be disturbed by any future agitation. As land-titles in this country have been, for the most part, handed down to posterity by regular sale, will or inheritance, without violence, the present owners of the soil righteously hold the titles of the original proprietors, and therefore have as firm a natural right to their lands as to any other property. Indeed their natural and inalienable rights are more firmly assured to them in respect to landed property than in respect to any other species of property, because land-titles are universally a matter of public record.

It will perhaps be objected to this statement that all land-titles in this country are founded on violence; that the title of the savage was set aside without his consent and without a fair remuneration. It is not necessary to our present purpose to vindicate our fathers against the charge of injustice in their treatment of the savage tribes with which they had to deal. It is enough to say, that the Indian tribes never were, in the light of the principles defended in this essay, the owners of the lands from which they retired before the white man. The greatest wrong which has been done to the Indian tribes in all our past history is our recognizing them as the owners of the soil, and treating with them on that basis. The lands over which the Indian roamed and hunted he did not subdue and reduce to cultivation. The original settlers took from the Indian no products of his labor. They found the continent in the same condition in which it would have been if, instead of savage men, only herds of buffalo had retired before them. They had the same labor to perform in preparing the land for cultivation which they would have had if no human beings had ever before dwelt upon it. Our land-titles are not in any sense derived from

the Indian. They originated legitimately from the original European inhabitants. The recognition of the Indian tribes as the owners of the soil has wrought nothing but evil to ourselves and to the Indian, in all our past history.

In the older countries of the eastern continent, however, far more embarrassing difficulties are encountered in dealing with the various phases of the land question. There the legislator must sometimes cut the knot which it is impossible to untie. Land-titles run back through ages of violence and barbarism; and it is a matter of certainty that, for the most part, present titles proceed from the arbitrary act of despotic rulers, or some deed of violence in some remote barbarous age, and not from the original rightful owner. Can the principles which have been defined in this discussion throw any light on the solution of these difficulties? They certainly cannot enable the legislator to determine in whom the original and rightful title resides. That is simply impossible; and none but an insane man would think of attempting it.

The natural law on which we are insisting is, however, just as available for adjusting the only practical questions which are to be determined in such cases, as in less complicated conditions of the problem. The ownership which is founded in nature is entire and exclusive. It is not only the right to hold and use, but equally the right to sell and convey, and to transmit by will or inheritance. It also involves all the liabilities of ownership, the liability to seizure and sale to pay the debts and fulfil the obligations of the owner, in the same manner as other property. Any exemption of the land-holder from any of these conditions is a violation of natural law, and in the long progress of the ages may be expected to work disaster in the body politic. All laws which restrain the present proprietor from selling his land at any time, to whomsoever he will, in any quantity large or small, or from bequeathing it at his death as he chooses, or from applying it to any use, consistent with the public safety, to which he wishes to apply it; or which restrain the creditor from seizing it by equitable legal process for the payment of a righteous debt, or the fulfilment of a righteous obligation of the holder, are in obvious violation of the natural law of land-ownership. The diseases of the body politic which such laws slowly,

and almost imperceptibly perhaps at first, but surely and inevitably generate, are numerous and various ; but one of them is so paramount over all others, and at the present time so disastrous, that no opportunity should be missed of calling the attention of all thoughtful men to it. If the present holder of an estate has only a life interest in it, merely holding it as the trustee of those who shall come after him, if it is exempted from seizure and sale in payment of his debts, the inevitable result in a long succession of generations will be, that most of the land of a country will be held by a few great families, and the great mass of the men who till the land will be shut out from the possibility of ever owning one foot of the soil which they till, they and their children and their children's children forever.

An hereditary degraded caste is thus established and perpetuated from generation to generation, composed of persons who can have no destiny and no hope, except to be the hewers of wood and drawers of water to those who are by law and consenting custom arbitrarily made the proprietors of the soil forever. There is no legislation more oppressive and in more flagrant violation of Nature's law than this. There is but one remedy for it in the countries where it exists, and that not a sudden and immediate one ; but if statesmen will have the courage bravely to apply it, it will be found certain and effectual. Let Nature give her own definition of the private ownership of land, and let the law of the land give complete effect to that definition by treating the present holder of the land as in all respects its absolute owner, having all the privileges, and subject to all the conditions, of absolute ownership. The immediate consequence will be that it will cease to be impossible for the landless to buy land. Land, like all other kinds of property, will soon be always in the market. Land-owners will be involved in debt, and their lands will be sold to the highest bidder to pay the debt. The owner of real estate will wish to sell his land, preferring some other kind of property. Parents at their death will divide their lands among their children, or order their landed estate sold to facilitate division of their property among their children. Land will be as certain to be always in the market as wheat or manufactured goods, and offered in quantities to suit purchasers.

On the other hand, laborers will feel the stimulus to industry and frugality. The unmarried will cease to accept the lot of their fathers who have gone before them, and aspire to a higher destiny, and defer marriage till they can own their own cottage and the plot of ground on which it stands. A new element of hope will be infused into the life of the whole agricultural population. It seems to us that nothing can be more obvious than that the statesmen of Europe and the world must come to this as the only foundation on which it is possible to rear a social structure which can stand the shocks of political agitation and defy the corrosion of time. We as Americans have no other reason for more profound gratitude to God for his goodness to our country than for the fact that American society is built on this impregnable foundation.

It is high time that all agrarians and social levellers should at length learn (what they have by no means begun to learn as yet) that what they really want for the remedy of the evils against which they are accustomed so eloquently to inveigh is, not the abolition of the private ownership of land, but its *universal establishment as the fundamental law of all civilized society*. The crushing weight under which civilization is groaning is not the private ownership of land, but the absolute want of it in most other countries except our own. The English monopoly of land is for the *want* of full and complete ownership in the present holder. If the present holder could sell his land at his option, and if his creditor could seize and sell it for the payment of debt, the English land monopoly would be at an end, and English society would be placed on a new line of progress for all the future. It is quite true that if the laborer is hindered by the laws, and by immemorial custom co-operating with the laws, from becoming the owner of land, he will inevitably sink to a condition but little removed from that of slavery; but if the ownership of land is subjected to all the conditions and liabilities which are involved in the possession of any other kind of property, the private ownership of land has no more tendency to enslave or degrade the laborer than the exclusive proprietorship of any other species of property. What has just been said of England may be said, *mutatis mutandis*, of most other countries of the world. They are agitated by an ardent passion for

reform, but all their efforts at reform will be futile if this one fundamental reform is not accomplished. The human race has reached a stage in its progress, in which no nation can enjoy any secure tranquillity in whose laws the natural ownership of land is fundamentally and persistently violated.

J. M. STURTEVANT.

MODERN ÆSTHETICISM.

THE word "æstheticism" is one of the most prominent words of the hour. The old and the young, the cultured and the illiterate, catch it up and pass it on. The places of public amusement in which it is set forth through burlesque and satire are crowded with enthusiastic throngs, far too much in sympathy, indeed, with the subject that is caricatured. Topics pertaining to the useful arts are yielding to those which have to do with ornament, and we are encouraged to the perusal of lines and stanzas whose only merit is that they utter the veriest nonsense with a show of wisdom, and aim to exalt the value of mere poetic finish over that which is substantial and instructive. The American nation, practical as it is, is for the time partially bewitched, and the craze must have its natural course. Out of it all, however, there come to the thoughtful mind questions of the deepest interest, and we are led to inquire into causes and effects, principles and aims, and separate, if possible, the false from the true.

A True Æstheticism.—There is no more patent principle to the careful student of language than what Archbishop Trench and other philologists have called "the degradation of words," the inevitable result of the decline of mental and moral life among a people. The word now before us is a marked illustration of the vicious principle in question. The danger in all such cases is that the baser use may come at length to usurp the place of the nobler, and a word once used in a good sense only be made to represent either its negation or its opposite.

There is such a thing as a true æstheticism, a principle and love of the beautiful in nature and art, in literature and life. Long before the technical name of "æsthetics" was given to

the science by Baumgarten in the last century, the fundamental ideas of the science were in the mind of man as a constituent part of his original nature. In one form or another the science and the art have been the subject of special study on the part of all liberally educated peoples. "God has made everything beautiful in his time," and has given to every soul that faculty of taste through whose spontaneous exercise he comes to the knowledge and appreciation of the beautiful. Hence history is full of the effort of man to express in fitting external form his innate sense of beauty, to body forth the æsthetic life within him. To the Greek mind it was the highest ambition to represent this indwelling ideal, and the world is aware to what marvellous success they attained in the sphere of sculpture at the hands of Phidias and Praxiteles, and in the sphere of verse through the creations of Homer and the great tragedians. The names of Titian, Correggio, Angelo, and Raphael in art, and of Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, and Tasso in letters, are sufficient to indicate the vigor of the æsthetic life in Italy. In modern Europe, in France and Germany, this æsthetic taste has developed itself more conspicuously in the sphere of literature. Racine and Corneille, Goethe and Schiller, are the artists of their respective lands.

All that is included in the term "the fine arts" takes its origin in the centre of this æsthetic nature, and from the earliest times sculpture, painting, architecture, music, and poetry have been the chosen media through which man has sought to approximate to his artistic ideals. In these days of visionary theories, on the one hand, and extreme practicality, on the other, it is too often forgotten upon what a high intellectual and moral plane the æsthetic has been placed by its leading adherents in every age. Some, indeed, have defined it with Aristotle as consisting in mere imitation, or with Socrates as identical with utility, or with Diderot as consisting in mere relation, or with Reynolds as in mediocrity, or with the school of Burke and Alison as altogether external and material. There is, however, another and a far truer conception of this principle. According to Schelling, it lies in character, or, as Goethe would state it, in the expression of character; Leibnitz made it consist in perfection; Kant, in the ideal; while Schlegel and Schil-

ler magnify the moral quality. "Beauty is truth, and truth is beauty," said Keats; and Mr. Ruskin goes so far as to state that the highest forms of beauty cannot be appreciated apart from some degree of moral sensibility. There are two names in the history of æsthetics that stand out in special prominence as exponents of that higher view of the subject which we are aiming to enforce. We refer to Plato and Cousin. To any at all inclined to endorse the lower views that are now prevailing, no better advice can be given than that they acquaint themselves with the theories of these lovers of the beautiful. With Plato beauty was the expression in man of the divine idea, a principle purely subjective in its character and ever related to the true and the good. The mind only was beautiful, and self-contemplation—the contemplation of the divine in man—was the most satisfying act of the soul. Cousin developed the same ennobling view, and held "that the most important element in the beautiful is the moral idea." Beauty centres in God and is worshipped in him. Art is the representation of the infinite, and must therefore be religious in character and aim.

We need, in modern times, to return to this high Platonic idea to show the true relations of the æsthetic to the intellectual and ethical, of form to thought. The subject before us has special reference to the æsthetic element in literature as the highest sphere of æsthetic art. No better service could be done at present to the cause of English and American literature than to show, in the light of existing errors, what a true æstheticism is, what its proper place in all literary expression, and what its vital relation to subject-matter and mind. It is to be shown that in poetry and prose alike beauty is "not mere expression, but the expression of ideas;" that it is not an "after-thought," but an integral part of the discourse, a something totally different from that lower view now prevalent in England. There is such a thing as intellectual and moral beauty, the beauty of truth, of holiness, the "beauty of the Lord God" shining out of Zion—"the perfection of beauty." There is an ideal as well as a visible beauty filling the soul of him who contemplates it, and to the ever nearer realization of which the soul seeks to come. The expression of character and of thought are forms of the beautiful more delicate and spiritual than any that can

be represented visibly. To whatever excellence the æsthetic instinct may develop in painting and sculpture, it is in the sphere of verbal expression that it seeks and finds its fullest play. "Music," says Richter, "has something holy;" and the expression of soul in literary forms is, in its last conception, a moral process. In sacred poetry, and most especially in that which is inspired, this process reaches its highest exercise. Hebrew poetry is the best example in literature of the union of the ethical and æsthetic.

Modern æstheticism, so called, is thus a flagrant abuse of an exalted principle in literature, and should not be allowed to prejudice either the educated or the popular mind against that true æstheticism to which reference has been made, and of which the world is still in need.

The Antecedents of Modern Æstheticism.—The special school of taste that is now disseminating its principles among us has not made itself manifest for the first time in the progress of literature. To every critical student of such progress this evil tendency is discernible at stated epochs all along the line of the history. If there have been golden ages in literature, there have been ages of affectation and conceit as well when outward finish was allowed to take the place of subject-matter, and the height of the poet's ambition was to pander to an unnatural popular craving for the visionary and inane. A brief historical survey of this vicious style as it expressed itself in Continental Europe and in England will be of interest in the discussion before us.

If we glance at Italy, we note that immediately after the brilliant period of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there followed an era of literary conceit. Tho protested against by such writers as Guarini and Tasso, it was opposed in vain, and ran its evil course. Marini was the apostle of this false taste.

In Spain, where Marini was educated, there is seen in the seventeenth century a similar degeneracy—what Bouterwek has termed "a new, irregular, and fantastic style." Gongora of Cordova was its chief exponent, and so pervasive was its influence that the classic pages of Lope de Vega betray its presence. Here, as in Italy, the evil was opposed in vain.

In France, in the middle of the same century, there is seen

the firm establishment of these false literary standards—a style of expression which an English critic has well described as “the most factitious literature that ever befooled men of genius.” Instead of finding here, as in the other countries, any single writer that acted as the leader, we find a school of artifice—the Hôtel de Rambouillet, the Femmes Savantes of the time of Louis le Grand. As they sit in solemn session and decide to call a lacquey “un nécessaire,” and a mirror “le conseiller des grâces,” we have a picture of the pedantry of the time, the very coquetry of literature. Every student of French literature is conversant with the fact that this false taste was bitterly and successfully opposed. To this very struggle, indeed, we owe some of the best specimens of French comedy and satire. The stinging criticisms of Boileau and the “*Précieuses Ridicules*” of Molière are sufficient proofs of this. It was not the least important result of this counter-movement that Italy herself, the mother of the conceits, caught from France the inspiration of a new literary life. If we ascend to Northern Europe, we find in Germany a similar evil from the close of the sixteenth century on to the opening of the eighteenth. It was the age of formalism and imitation. In the epic and drama alike true poetic sublimity gave way to platitude; while in lyric verse also we fail to discover the presence of genuine passion. As to most of the productions of that period, it is sufficient to say with Harrison “that the road from Hamburg to Berlin is not flatter.” Such has been the tendency on the Continent to the unnatural in style—what Bacon would call “the first distemper of learning.” It is most suggestive to note that this development of false taste has been closely connected, in every instance, with periods of special literary excellence: in Italy with the time of Tasso; in Spain with that of Cervantes; in France with that of Racine; and in Germany with that of Luther.

Modern æstheticism, however, we are told, is English by way of eminence, and the question naturally arises whether it has any historic precedent on English soil. This question must be answered affirmatively, and we are taken back three centuries in our history to the age of Elizabeth and the writings of Lyly. Euphuism was the false æstheticism of the age, and John Lyly was its apostle. Strange to say the vicious style is

traced to Italy—the home of Marini. “There be the enchantments of Circe,” says Ascham, “brought out of Italie to mar men’s manners in England much by example of ill life, but more by principles of bad books.” It is not our purpose here to discuss euphuism with its “fine phrases, smooth quips, and jesting without meane.” Suffice it to say that it was marked by excess of ornament, far-fetched allusion, and crude antithesis, so that the affected took the place of the natural, and the art of literary expression was degraded to “a playing with words and idle similes.” “It is a world to see,” says Lyly himself, “how Englishmen desire to hear finer speech than the language will allow, to eat finer bread than is made of wheat, and to wear finer cloth than is wrought of wool.” It was what Macaulay would ironically term “the golden age of literary mediocrity,” when a premium was paid to brainless poetasters and the Muse of Poetry had departed. Later still in English letters this same vice appeared in the metaphysical school of Donne and Cowley; in the second- and third-rate poetry of the Restoration; in some of the poetry of the reign of Anne; and now in modern English verse in the pages of Rossetti and Swinburne, of Morris and Wilde. Modern æstheticism, as to its historical origin, is thus the normal outgrowth of the false taste of earlier times. The chronological sequence is fully preserved, and the danger is whether we have not entered upon an era when the earlier forms of this evil will be more than renewed in the later, and the poetry of the immediate future be marked by the utter absence of ethical and intellectual life. In some respects the hour is ripe for such a development, and many are working directly and indirectly on its behalf. There is much in the social, philosophical, and moral character of the times to encourage its progress. He is a short-sighted observer of the course of English poetry, as now under criticism, who does not discover a steady movement from high poetic power to mediocrity, from faith to doubt, and from unsullied purity to a questionable *morale*. It is in fullest view of this growing tendency to the artificial that Morley sounds in time the note of alarm to all who are fostering it. As he vigorously expresses it, “Absolute truth of manner is the life of literature, and affected ornaments cannot arise out of the stir of a mind wholly intent upon its

subject." Enthusiastic devotion to the truth must express itself in a plain, honest manner, speaking right on with a simple aim to the end in view. The poetry of the heart must be informal in its utterances, and, in so far as beautiful, must express the pure beauty of nature itself, whose very essence is simplicity.

Characteristics of Modern Æstheticism.—If we inquire closely into the elements of this modern school, we may discover two or three of special note.

1. Sentimentalism. In the mental aspect of it it represents the dominance of sentiment over intellect. No one can have read the productions of the school of Wilde without having been struck by the absence of the intellectual element. We know indeed that it is still an open question with critics as to what degree of mental power the production of a high order of poetry demands, and as to what the precise relations of the poet and the prose writer may be in this particular. Without entering upon this question, it is in place to state that there is in all the higher forms of verse a distinct intellectual as well as emotive element; that in such forms as the epic and the drama mental power may find its fullest exercise. In such a sphere the work of the bard is a purely creative and originating work, in which the philosophic as well as the poetic imagination is at play, in which indeed the whole man in his aggregate power is called into productive action. Even in impassioned or lyric verse, such as we find in Milton's shorter poems, no small degree of mental power is requisite. It is true that the poetic art has to do largely with the imagination and the feelings, but these are the media only through which the thought of the poet expresses itself; and tho pleasure is said to be its final end, it is that kind of pleasure which arises from the reception of the truth in attractive forms. In all genuine poetry, as in the more substantial form of prose, truth is the subject-matter, the love of the truth is the inspiring principle, and its expression to the world for the worthiest ends its final purpose. Poetry, as Aristotle taught, is imitative; but it is far more than that; and if fancy has a freer range than in the sphere of prose, intellect and good sense have place as well. It is thus that Mr. Devey has aptly remarked, "This thrusting the idle figments of the fancy

too prominently forward as the grand criterion of poetry has been a source of great evil. All æsthetic feeling as a motive power is banished from the world of action to the sphere of sentiment. Modern æstheticism has taken advantage of this popular fallacy, and is indeed its best exponent. It is based upon an unwarrantable and ill-timed opinion that poetry is but a synonym for the fanciful and superficial; that, as prose has to do with the rational nature of man, poetry finds its place upon the surface of his thought, and is at best to be regarded but an accomplishment for the leisure hours of the people."

Some of the shorter poems of Wilde, such as "Silentium Amoris," or the longer ones, such as "The Burden of Itys," will indicate to the reader the character of this verse. It is humiliating as well as revolting to be the witness of such literary travesties, when a few inane verses written in praise of a flower or an effeminate maiden take precedence of the creative lines of a Milton, when tawdry sentiment befitting the nursery only usurps the place of honest Saxon sense, and the poet becomes irrational in order to cater to the fanciful follies of the hour. If our apostle of beauty had come to us sanctioned by all those noble antecedents which belong to the true bard; if he had brought with him any evidences of his poetic inspiration and an unselfish zeal to inspire others; if he had come prepared to exalt before the mind of the age a true conception of the beautiful in art and letters and shown us what a true æsthete was, then could the leading minds of the land give him that cordial greeting that has been given him by others, and every interest of true art and good letters would have been enhanced. Instead of this, what do we have offered us? Fanciful vagaries expressed in equally fanciful metres; a studied parade of wisdom in the place of wisdom itself; poetical bombast and fustian rather than the solid stuff itself. This, we are told, is the literary staple of the period, the poetry of the future, the real English Renaissance of the century whose origin Mr. Wilde unfortunately traces to the French Revolution, and whose most complete realization he strangely attributes to the classical Keats. Professing to be the true pre-Raphaelism of the century—a full return to nature—it is anything but natural. Boasting in the claim that now is offered to the age a poetry of ideas

and creations, we read nothing but meaningless words and phrases. Pointing to the verse of Swinburne and Rossetti as "flawless in technique," it must be said in reply that the "technique" of the verse is more conspicuous than the thought beneath it.

"If you ask," says Wilde, "nine tenths of the British public what is the meaning of the word 'æstheticism,' they will tell you that it is the word for 'affectation.'" The British public is right. The difference between the sickly sonnets of Sidney to Astrophel and Stella and the Christian epic of Spenser marks the difference we are noting between the absence and the presence of intellectual power in poetry; between a false and a true æstheticism; between sentiment and sense.

2. Sensualism. The second characteristic of this school of poetry is a distinctively moral one, and may be expressed in the statement that the sensual element rules the ethical and spiritual. There is a place for the sensuous or impassioned element in all genuine lyric verse, as Milton suggests in his definition of poetry as "simple, sensuous, and passionate." There is a place for emotional imagery. This, however, never passes the conditions of propriety as in the poetry before us. The sensuous is one thing; the sensual is another. So recent an author as Southey utters bitter words against the "Satanic school" of Byron and his followers in playing the part of "pander-general to the youth of Great Britain." He deplores the decline of ethical tone in English letters, protests that the interests of all true æsthetic art are one with those of morality, and wonders in sadness to what extremes this immoral tendency is to run. As the published poems of Oscar Wilde lie before us, we note that those which are the longest, and in which he aims to exhibit his best power, are morally the most objectionable, such as "The Garden of Eros" and "Charmides." We have in this latter one a verse which answers as the text of most of his poetry:

" Those who have never known a lover's sin
Let them not read my ditty, it will be
To their dull ears so musicless and thin
That they will have no joy of it ; but ye
To whose wan cheeks now creeps the lingering smile,
Ye who have learned who Eros is—O listen yet a while."

So in "Panthea" we read :

" Nay, let us walk from fire unto fire,
 From passionate pain to deadlier delight ;
 I am too young to live without desire,
 Too young art thou to waste this summer night
 Asking those idle questions which of old
 Man sought of seer and oracle and no reply was told.
 For, sweet, to feel is better than to know,
 And wisdom is a childless heritage.
 One pulse of passion, youth's first fiery glow,
 Are worth the hoarded proverbs of the sage.
 Vex not thy soul with dead philosophy :
 Have we not lips to kiss with, hearts to love, and eyes to see ?"

Such selections as these will prepare us for many of the sayings of this modern school—"Any element of morals or implied reference to a standard of good and evil in art is often a sign of a certain incompleteness of vision." "Indeed, we should never talk of a moral or an immoral poem. Poems are well written or badly written, that is all. All good work aims at a purely artistic effect." This, certainly, is æsthetic loyalty to a fault, and a polite invitation for those to retire from the domain of letters who allow the ethical to have any place whatever in the expression of their thought. As far as the *morale* of this modern movement is concerned, the key-note of it is distinctly sounded,—the same note that was heard in the days of Charles II. The presence of the ethical feature in English letters is clearly marked, and especially in its earlier periods. All the antecedents of our literature are moral, and in so far as later literature has been different, it has been a departure from primitive standards. It is in the light of this principle that we stoutly protest against the application of the phrase "the English Renaissance" to this modern type of poetry. Its historical prototypes in euphuism and the metaphysical school were marked exceptions to the law of English verse. The movement in every aspect of it is a decadence, marked by a bold abuse of language in the interests of error, well designed to catch the ear of those with whom the word "renaissance" is quite sufficient to atone for all evils. This new departure is un-Saxon throughout, and the memory of Caedmon, Spenser, Milton, and Wordsworth should be sufficient to rebuke it. Never in our literary

history has an immoral school of letters arisen save under the ban, and by continued opposition has at length been made to yield to the force of moral claims. It will be so with this latest "renaissance." "He who would not be frustrate of his hope," says Milton, "to write well hereafter in laudable things ought himself to be a true poem—a pattern of the best things." This is the orthodox doctrine of the past, and which our modern apostles have forgotten when they say "that poetry is neither moral nor immoral;" and here is the point at which the great danger of modern æstheticism lies. Pitiabie as is its want of mental stamina, this is incidental in comparison with the untold harm that may accrue to the rising authors of a nation and to the people at large. Mr. Wilde, as we have seen, illustrates the evil in the case of his own poetry. The only paradise to which Mr. Morris invites us is an "Earthly Paradise." Rossetti in his "Rose Mary" and other poems sings in the same unworthy strain. One has but to read a few pages in Swinburne and catch their spirit to endorse the reference of an English critic to his "pagan and voluptuous verse," the true historic and moral sequence of Shelley and Byron. It requires but a very superficial observation of morals to note the rapid progress that is being made in the direction of a low literary taste. Within the sphere of poetry and prose alike, and in that department of literature which is periodical and popular, the evil is more and more flagrant. That high æsthetic taste which seeks purity in letters for its own sake, and which turns in disgust from the presence of the base, is fast giving place to a sickly appetite for the unclean. In poetry and in fiction alike he is becoming popular who keeps what morality he has to himself, and who keeps his readers so near the border-line between the pure and the impure as to foster an unhealthy curiosity and stimulate an evil imagination. Whatever the avowed intentions of this English Renaissance may be, it is responsible for giving a new impulse to these lower tendencies. Its apostles speak in pleasing phrase of the sense of the beautiful in art, of a "supreme æsthetic faculty," of the passionate calm of the romantic spirit, of an intense seeking after perfection, of the "high hours of the artist when thought is not." Yet we find these pet phrases to be the veriest twaddle. They are themselves an additional proof of

the evil of that school of poetry whose leaders may utter one thing and mean another or mean nothing, and who, without any well-defined principles of their own, ride upon the back of a few verbal hobbies and give loose reins as they pass to every form of sensualism. To be duped by the casuistry of such teachers is as irritating as it is to be misled by their teachings. Hence it is the duty of every man at all devoted to the interests of a true literary art and *morale* to strip these pretentious reformers of all their disguises; to call things by their right names, and to seek a safer leadership. The difference between the chaste sentiment of Milton's "Comus" and the immoral spirit of the poems of Wycherly will indicate the difference we are noting between the presence and the absence of ethical purity in verse, between a true and a false æstheticism.

3. Scepticism. We have already marked the mental and moral characteristics of the school of poetry before us. In seeking for its philosophical feature, we may speak of it as sceptical rather than biblical. "We have," says Wilde, "a positive, special, independent, metaphysical science which the mind of the average Philistine Briton is incapable of understanding." We admit the difficulty of understanding it. It is safe, however, to speak of it in general terms as a compound of fatalism, pantheism, and pessimism—the prevailing materialism or "dirt philosophy" of the day. Doubt takes the place of faith, and the Word of God is set aside as untrustworthy and needless. If we read in Kant of transcendental æsthetics, we are now reading of physiological æsthetics. The science of the beautiful is reduced to actual measurement—to that physical or physiological basis to which modern teachings are reducing all things. These are the days of flesh and blood. We are speaking of the relations of modern æstheticism to modern philosophy, and it is suggestive to note that Schopenhauer, the apostle of pessimism, has taken special pains, in connection with his psychological system, to show the exact relations thereto of ethics on the one hand and æsthetics on the other—to co-ordinate them, in fact, as a unique, metaphysical system. While it is undoubtedly true, as Mr. Bowen states, that Schopenhauer's "theory of æsthetics is the least objectionable portion of his system," and while in accordance with that philosophy all beauty is resolved into the

ideal or pantheistic, still his ethics and æsthetics are alike developed in the interests of pessimism. There is, after all, no better test of the literature and life of any period than the prevailing philosophy of that period, acting in part as a cause and being in part an effect of it. 'Twas so in France in the reckless reign of atheistic negations. Philosophy, life, and literature were alike godless. 'Twas so in a marked degree in the spread of deistical principles in England, and the "Leviathan" of Hobbes marked alike the morals and letters of the time. We cannot refrain from stating just here that an invaluable service would be done to the cause of English letters and English philosophy by any one who would give to the world the exact historical and logical relations of these two departments since the days of Shakespeare and Bacon. Nowhere is this interdependence more clearly seen than in the times through which we are passing. This modern school has exhibited no common sagacity in catching the spirit of the times, and under the watchword of *Æstheticism* leading the popular mind to the most dangerous extremes. If we turn to the poetry of Mr. Wilde, and especially to "Panthea" and "Humanitad," we shall see the pantheism and pessimism of the school.

" We are resolved into the supreme air ;
 We are made one with what we touch and see ;
 With our heart's blood each crimson sun is fair,
 With our young lives each spring-impassioned tree
 Flames into green , the wildest beasts that range
 The moor our kinsmen are ; all life is one, and all is change :
 From lower cells of waking life we pass
 To full perfection ; thus the world grows old ;
 We who are godlike now were once a mass
 Of quivering purple flecked with bars of gold,
 Unsentient or of joy or misery,
 And tossed in terrible tangles of some wild and wind-swept sea."

In the " Humanitad " we read :

" Ah ! it was easy when the world was young
 To keep one's life free and inviolate ;
 From our sad lips another song is rung,
 By our own hands our heads are desecrate,
 Wanderers in drear exile, and dispossessed
 Of what should be our own, we can but feed on wild unrest."

So runs the verse through all the grades of doubt to bold denial of God and good. We are not to be deceived by words and symbols and rhythmic metres. If this modern craze expended itself in peculiar styles of dress and furniture, or in its literary province were confined to writing senseless stanzas to despairing maidens to relieve the *ennui* of the hour, then might it be tolerated or dismissed with pleasantry. Beneath the æsthetic, however, are the ethic and the philosophic, revealing themselves through it as a medium. If it be asked in what way this modern philosophy of the material reveals itself in practical life through æstheticism, we answer that it begets the theory of indifference as to human life; its mission and final ends, an evident degradation of life from the lofty moral plane on which the Bible places it to a selfish and mercenary level.

It is in the direct interests of this lower view that men are aiming to reason out of life the supernatural element and all there is in it that gives it solemnity and spiritual hope. God is made but the highest expression of an order of developments. The Word of God is made the product of human teachers. Miracle is the exceptional action of ordinary physical laws. Providence is a childish delusion of timid and dependent natures; our present state but a necessary condition of something that follows in an infinite series of stages; conscience an effeminate sentiment, and the future world one of the scares of the nursery. It is evident that on such a basis the world becomes either a playground for thoughtless merriment or a theatre for lawless riot. Life is reduced to a serio-comic farce or an utterly cheerless struggle for profitless objects, and every man is the beginning and the end of his own being. This is the view of life which Tennyson graphically satirizes in "The Vision of Sin" as the rider o'er the withered heath halts at the inn and says to the host:

" Fill the cup and fill the can ;
 Have a rouse before the morn :
 Every moment dies a man,
 Every moment one is born.
 Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,
 While we keep a little breath !
 Drink to heavy Ignorance !
 Hob-and-nob with brother Death !"

These are the sentiments which Byron endorsed in "Don Juan" and Shelley in "Queen Mab," of which the poems and ballads of Swinburne are full, and in which modern poetry and fiction dangerously indulge. Sarcastic slurs are heard as to there being any solemn purport in life, the ridicule of anything that assumes to call it more than a high form of animal being. This is just the kind of philosophy and literature that the world does not need in the present age. If ever there was a time when the people of England and America needed moral quickening, it is now. It is singularly unfortunate that in the urgent call of the hour for the best things modern æstheticism offers us at second hand the destructive theories of fatalism. Sterling thought is demanded and sentiment is given us. Purity is needed and sensualism is offered, and unbelief answers the appeal for faith. There is needed the manly, wholesome element in literature and we have given us the affected and morbid, and we resort in our disappointment to the fervent lines of Wordsworth:

" Milton ! thou should'st be living at this hour :
England hath need of thee : she is a fen
Of stagnant waters ; we are selfish men ;
Oh ! raise us up, return to us again,
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power."

If we inquire, then, as to the cure for the current tendencies of the hour, we answer that modern æstheticism, under whatever specious name or form, is to be met and rebuked by the truth. Sentiment must give place to sense, impurity to purity, and doubt to faith. In a word, the best antidote is a more pronounced and biblical theism—the increasing emphasis of the supernatural element in the world's history—and in the development of literature. What, it is often asked, is the prospective future of English and American poetry? If the renaissance in progress is really English in origin, and if, as Mr. Wilde tells us, America is to "complete this great movement," then the answer is easy. The closing years of the nineteenth century will mark the increasing decadence of mental and moral vigor in our letters. The epic and dramatic will give place to the sensual lyric, and creative genius to poetic mediocrity. One important reason why the place of the older English and American au-

thors now fast passing away is not being rapidly filled by rising young authors of literary genius is found in the dominance of the "dirt philosophy" and its depressing effect on pure poetic genius. "The whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint." Material tendencies are in the ascendant, and modern æstheticism is wise enough to know its hour. The literature of the future is, hence, dependent on certain conditions. When present sceptical tendencies shall have had their course and done their work, then will the life of the time take on its spiritual meaning, and the expression of that life in literary form be an intelligent, chaste, and ethical expression. The æstheticism that we need in English poetry is that which is vitally related to the true and the good.

THEODORE W. HUNT.

THE COLLAPSE OF FAITH.

THE manifold phases of religious doubt and questioning which have succeeded one another so rapidly in this our mobile and sensitive generation, are well expressed by a few descriptive phrases, which are more or less significant and forcible. The metaphor which lurks behind each one of these phrases is at least suggestive of reflection and inquiry. "The Eclipse of Faith" suggests the darkness and gloom which for the moment may oppress the individual or the community. But it also suggests the conviction, or at least the hope, that this condition is only temporary. The sun is not extinguished because it is darkened. The individual man, or the community, perhaps needs only to change its position in order to come again into the bright and blessed light. "The Decay of Faith" emphasizes some diseased or abnormal action of the powers, from which recovery is possible. Should such a decay terminate in the dissolution of the individual, the life of the community may still go on, and perhaps with renewed energy. Both these phrases imply if they do not express the underlying conviction that faith has solid grounds of truth on which it may rest; and consequently, tho an individual or a generation may falter in its allegiance, the truth will not fail to shine upon other souls and upon other generations with intenser brilliancy and effect.

But what phrase shall we select to express that type of unbelief which seems to have taken so strong a hold of not a few of the present generation—whether they are unwilling sceptics, agnostic seekers who never find, or earnest and reverent souls who are in terror lest God and his truth have ceased to be because so many wise men deny them? What shall we say of the alarm of those lookers-on who observe not merely that many

faintly believe, but discover the more appalling evidence that multitudes are drifting into the half-formed conviction that the reasons for faith seem one after another to be dissipated by the advance of science and culture as morning clouds melt before the morning light?

No phrase seems more fitting for this state of mingled doubt and fear than "*The Collapse of Faith*," whether it describes the failure of faith or the fear that this failure is reasonable and is likely to be universal. Other phrases make the presence or absence of faith to be dependent on the subjective condition of the persons concerned. Whether the hindrances to faith in these cases be intellectual or moral, they have only to be removed and the light of truth will appear again. The condition for which we seek a suitable appellation is the more or less settled and prevailing conviction that faith is not only failing, but that it is doomed to a slow but certain dissolution, and that all the indications of the prevailing time-spirit justify this conclusion.

We are well aware that the presence and prevalence of such a conviction are no new phenomena in the history of Christendom. Bishop Butler recognizes a similar collapse of faith in his time in the words so often quoted: "It is come. I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious; and accordingly they treat it as if in the present age this were an agreed point among all people of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were by way of reprisals for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world." It was doubtless his reflections on this condition of opinion which led him on one occasion when walking in his garden with his chaplain to stop suddenly and ask the question, "Why might not whole communities and public bodies be seized with fits of insanity as well as individuals?" and in response to the reply, to add, "Nothing but this principle, that they are liable to insanity equally at least with private persons, can account for the major part of those transactions of which we read in history." The amiable yet sharp-witted Berkeley has drawn a lively portrait of the freethinkers of his time, which, with certain inconsiderable changes, finds its exact counterpart in the ad-

vanced thinkers of our own time. Niebuhr, the leader and almost creator of modern historical criticism, recognized the atheistic unbelief of his own day as worse than insanity—as almost a demoniacal frenzy.

It avails but little, however, to refer to Butler or Berkeley, or even to Niebuhr with his old-fashioned notions about Providence and prayer and moral retribution which he so obstinately retained with his new theories of the philosophy of history. The advanced critics of our time are characteristically averse to any comparison of old times and old thoughts with the events and thoughts of the present. Butler and Berkeley, in the opinion of many, have been altogether left behind by the prodigious advances of modern science and the deeper insight of modern philosophy. Development and evolution are no longer used in the high spiritual significance in which Niebuhr employed these terms. It is only as these terms have become wholly materialized by Comte and Spencer that they are accepted in the most modern philosophy.

The authority of Butler has not only been set aside, but by the dexterous use of modern dialectics it has been shown that the cumbrous and old-fashioned battery which he contrived for the defence of Christianity is capable of being used with deadly effect by the new-fashioned assailants of theism. And as for Berkeley, the new atheistic materialism is ostentatiously Berkeleyan in its creed—using the very arguments which Berkeley devised for the annihilation of matter to demonstrate that spirit and matter are in substance but one.

Leaving the times of Butler and Berkeley to themselves, with their historians and critics, and returning to our own, we cannot deny the fact that a collapse of faith has befallen us in a somewhat peculiar and a very formidable fashion. Its most alarming feature is this, that, whether reasonably or unreasonably, men of knowledge and culture are so extensively taking it for granted that Christian theism, in the essential truths of personality in God, responsibility in man, and the providential and supernatural conduct of human history, is doomed to vanish before what is called modern science and culture. They do not all affirm that this collapse will be final. But they find unmistakable and alarming indications that it is making rapid progress

among thinking and cultivated men. We could cite many arguments and concessions to this effect from numberless essays and criticisms proceeding from very able and discerning writers who represent various schools of thought and feeling. This conclusion is held, indeed, in various forms: by some in the form of a fixed and logical conclusion, by others as a gloomy and unwelcome foreboding, by others as a shivering misgiving, by others in a spirit of sorrowing but patient fortitude, by others in a temper of frivolous refinement, and by others in a mood of malignant recklessness or despairing pessimism. In short, there is alarming evidence that a positive and scornful contempt of Christian theism as a doctrine and a life, a desponding or malignant disbelief in its truth, and a more or less assured confidence in its downfall have become more or less definitely the creed of many young men in England and America.

We propose to examine the reasons for these conclusions, in whatever form or spirit they may be held, and whether by the friends or the foes of the Christian faith. To give greater definiteness to our theme, we would propose the definite inquiry whether faith has in the last century gained or lost in the argument, and especially whether, under the critical and confident attacks that are peculiar to the present age, her cause is weaker or stronger at the court of the last resort—the court of the sober second thoughts of considerate and competent men. By the argument we do not mean the argument as viewed in the light of a rigid and dry logic, but in the actual hold which the truths in question have gained and are likely to keep in the convictions of the present and the next generation. We are prepared to concede that in no century since the Protestant Reformation have the opinions of believers in Christian theism been modified in so many particulars as during the present. And yet we would contend that in spite of these changes, and in many cases in consequence of these changes, faith in Christian theism and all that it involves never stood so strongly on grounds of reason in the minds of those who accept it as true, and never could urge so many arguments in its defence. Our position implies that we do not accept as final the confident, and in a sense the honest, unbeliefs of eminent scientists who may be narrow in proportion to their eminence. Nor are we

convinced by the *a priori* assumptions of pantheistic or agnostic philosophers by profession, nor by the logical deductions of the school of critics who from the opening to the close of human history deny the possibility that God can direct or interfere with it as puerile or fanatical. We do not sympathize with the supercilious tone of that literary criticism which is moved by no fervent sympathy with those views of duty or spiritual aspiration which are characteristically Christian, whether Christianity be true or false. While we recognize the force of all these classes of negative arguments and prepossessions, we find stronger reasons for rejecting than for accepting them. While we would do the amplest justice to the considerations which induce so many to adopt negative conclusions, and while we sympathize with the alarm which is felt by so many honest inquirers after truth lest the foundations of faith should be destroyed, we would reassure them and reassure ourselves with a brief survey of the argument for and against the Christian faith as it stands at the present time, under the several heads to which we have referred.

I. It will be conceded by common consent that what is called *modern science* should be considered first of all, as well for its intrinsic claims to attention as for the confidence with which its authority is appealed to. We are also compelled to connect *philosophy* with science, because by a naïve and therefore pertinacious effrontery modern science claims to have become a philosophy, and as such to furnish materials and to dictate principles, methods, and laws for every department of special investigation. Even when science ignores and denounces metaphysics and speculation it unconsciously sets up and uses a metaphysics of its own, though this is often nothing better than a transformed and amplified physiology or physics.

Connecting for these reasons science and philosophy together, we propose as our first inquiry: What effect upon the great argument before us has been wrought during the preceding century by the changes in each and in both, whether considered separately or as one? We limit our view to the last century because, with the exception of the Newtonian physics, terrestrial and celestial, modern science in every one of its divisions has been the growth of this period. Within this time

also every variety of metaphysics, including the transfigured or rather the disguised physics of which we have spoken, has had its ardent representatives and devotees.

Going back a little earlier than a century ago, we find that in 1770 the "*Système de la Nature*," by Baron Von Holbach, very generally attracted the attention of the philosophers of Europe, and claimed to express the ultimate and prevailing thought of the age. It was grossly and avowedly atheistic, painfully but not brilliantly imaginative, violently and contemptuously arrogant with respect to any and every form of religious faith and feeling. It called forth at once the indignant protest of Voltaire, who represented the reasoned deism of the logical school, and subsequently the passionate remonstrances of Rousseau, the founder and leader of the sentimentalists. Far gone in its negations as the new illumination of science and philosophy had proceeded, it had not gone far enough to respond with distinct and full-mouthed assent to Von Holbach's outspoken and defiant assault upon theism. And yet this writer in a most important sense had the argument of his time on his side. He commanded the assent of the hour. Against his logic, whether weak or strong, whether it were the logic of science or sentiment, Voltaire's ingenious protests and Rousseau's eloquent appeals could avail but little, and that little but for a little while. When we say he had the argument we certainly do not mean that he had the truth on his side, but that all the logic was on his side which was provided in the principles and premises which were currently recognized by cultivated men in respect to man and his significance in the universe. To use a current if not a cant phrase of our day, Holbach and his gospel of atheism represented the *Zeit-Geist* of 1770, and therefore it carried the day.

The "*Système de la Nature*" has little meaning and less force for thinkers of the present generation. The few who read it now read it as a philosophical curiosity. It is wholly disregarded by fresh and earnest seekers after truth. This is partly owing to its defects of style and to the abundant use of its verbose and flowery rhetoric in place of soberly reasoned deductions from accepted principles. A better reason why it has lost favor with the present generation is that its science is

antiquated, having literally been left behind in every point of detail by the rush of discovery and experiment since 1770. The modern reader of this old argument, if argument it may be called, is therefore compelled to read it over against a background of assumed scientific truth which has been exploded or outgrown. Or if it is not wholly outgrown, in place of what was a scanty and shadowy framework is seen a finished and elaborate structure of verified forces and laws. The scientific reasoner of the present day literally lives in a new physical and spiritual universe, with its correlated forces, its formulated laws, and above all with its long history of developed progress, that promises a still more imposing future. Splendid as were Holbach's fantastic dreams of the undeveloped forces of nature, he did not anticipate the half of what has since been realized of her then undiscovered capacities and her correlated laws.

Two treatises of the present day may not unfairly be taken as representing the fairest expression of the negative attitude of modern science with respect to theism. The one is *Atheistic*, the other is *Agnostic*. Positive atheism is taught in "A Candid Examination of Theism," by Physicus. The theory of agnosticism or agnostic atheism is expounded at length in Mr. Herbert Spencer's "First Principles." The first is a reasoned argument to the conclusion that modern science, by its discovery of the doctrine of the conservation of force, finds no occasion whatever to believe in design or in God. The introduction to the second professes to prove that while modern science finds reason to believe that there is an Absolute, it finds equal reason for denying that this Absolute can ever be known. Both these writers seem at first thought to have an immense advantage over Von Holbach in the vast and imposing additions which modern science has made to our knowledge of 'verified facts and to our stock of stimulating and quickening theories. A close examination of each will show, however, that neither of these gains, nor both together, have made the logic of the new atheism or the new agnosticism a jot more convincing than the logic of the old. They have neither added a single new link to the old chain nor made a single old link stronger than it was before. They have neither introduced a new method of using the old facts or the new, nor weakened in any particular any of the old

methods of inference or any of the old grounds of belief. The new universe of modern science has indeed become immensely expanded to man's certain insight and been made immeasurably more impressive to his instructed and quickened imagination. Its spaces stretch out in every direction before the eye in immeasurable tracts which the imagination falters in its attempts to traverse. But the instructed eye finds in these most distant provinces examples of order, beauty, and goodness as brilliant and overwhelming as in those which are near. New agents have been discovered in the far and the near, the products and actings of which have made science familiar even to uninstructed minds as the minister and magician of art.

It would seem at first that these brilliant discoveries, these verified facts, and these determined laws would have made the old theory of a self-existent, creating, and loving Intelligence more necessary and more acceptable to the scientific intellect. At the least, we might conclude that the logic of atheism could find no advantage in modern science above the logic of theism. Such at least is the judgment of the unsophisticated intellect when first confronted with the facts and relations which science reveals.

It becomes therefore a question of more than curious interest, by what processes of intellectual legerdemain has the new atheism become so plausible, and by what subtle transitions of thought have the atheistic and agnostic theories so largely taken possession of the *Zeit-Geist* of the present generation. The strength of these theories and the likelihood of their endurance may be estimated by a brief review of their history, involving as it must a critical judgment of the logical value of the steps in the process by which they have grown into such gigantic proportions and been applied to such appalling conclusions.

The least informed of the students of science is not ignorant that the so-called galvanic force, originally a product of the subtle chemistry which was almost unknown in 1770, has enabled us to excite and regulate in various ways that molecular action of which we so glibly speak, but which we very imperfectly understand. We have gone so far, at least, that we can talk by threads of metal beneath and athwart the sky. We

have learned by processes as simple as they are daring to interpret the constituents of the nearest and the remotest of the stars. Many of the forces and agents which we had counted as diverse we have learned to regard as one. We can even convert the one into the other backwards and forwards, forwards and backwards, till they seem to assume the arts and ways of a mocking and mischief-loving Proteus. And yet we have learned to predict and trace his arts and ways so far as to have found the expression and condition of each form of force in some mode or rate of molecular action. Molecular action, again, we have connected with the motion of masses and to this have found affinities in the undulating light and in the supposed throbbing and heat-bearing ether. We have concluded by legitimate theorizing that the so-called physical forces are correlated by a common measure or by mensurable motion, and that the agents or atoms which defy the discernment of the senses, whether differing in quantity only or also in quality, do yet perform their several functions after common relations of number and proportion.

We have learned far more than this. The observed interchange of material forces very naturally enforced attention to the possible interdependence and reciprocal action of the several parts and agents of the physical universe. It has forced science to recognize the universe itself as an organism of co-acting and conspiring parts, each of which must act with and upon all the rest, and in turn be acted on by each and all, in order that any one may perform its humblest or its noblest office. This relationship, which had always been more or less distinctly recognized in the sphere of life, and which has given its plausibility and charm to pantheism in its grosser and more spiritual forms, had struggled almost in vain to find a place within the domain of the inorganic until the doctrine of the correlation of force flung the door widely open for its admission. This gave it authority and prestige with a class of scientists who would otherwise have rejected it as utterly strange to the traditions and axioms of the mechanical philosophy. With organic relations a way was also opened for development or evolution. These were first limited to the familiar processes of growth from simpler to more complex forms and from humbler to nobler

functions. For this progress some definitely working agency must be subsidized and some semblance of law and regularity must be provided, and forthwith heredity and tendency to variation and the struggle for existence and natural selection emerged in succession upon the arena, all being summed up under the general title of evolution. Some of these forces or laws were hospitably admitted within the temple of the new physics without the tests and passwords usual to science of verification by induction and formulation through laws. They have certainly enriched our scientific vocabulary if they have not added to the definiteness of our scientific conceptions. They have immensely stimulated if they have not completely satisfied the scientific imagination.

But the entire history has not yet been told. At a somewhat early stage of this history which we have traced, palæontology had begun to read in the records of the remoter ages an undeniable testimony to progress and development of some sort, such as would be altogether consistent with the working of the law of evolution, so soon as it should be hypostasized as an agent or force in the way already explained. Plausible analogies suggested themselves between the development of living germs into complicated organisms and certain mechanical changes in form, structure, or orbit. These again were assumed to have been provided for in some original impulse of motion, which it was conjectured might involve the development of the several forms of molecular activity which were required to account for the phenomena of heat, light, and color, etc. Very suddenly our scientific dialect is enriched by three separate conceptions used in swift and unnoticed interchange with one another, viz.: *development* mechanically viewed, *evolution* in the organic sense, and last of all *differentiation*—a purely logical term. These three, as we have said, are used interchangeably by many scientists, and not infrequently are inextricably confounded. Similarly, mechanical accretion, structural growth, with a capacity for special functions, and logical integration, were included under one indiscriminate generalization. Last of all, by one gigantic leap of personification founded on a most comprehensive analogy the progressive movement of evolution was exalted as at once the originating force and the ultimate law of

all being, whether living or dead, whether material or spiritual, and crowned with all the glories which were once accorded to a self-existent and intelligent person, but are now transferred to the unknown and unknowable Absolute.

These wide-reaching conclusions, it should be observed, are claimed by many to be severely and strictly scientific. There are indeed many scientists—we trust they are very many—who know that some are nothing more than simple hypotheses, and as such belong to pure philosophy. They are none the worse for this reason, if they are only recognized as mere speculations. Their claims to acceptance or authority should be firmly resisted whenever it is claimed that they have been demonstrated or verified as scientific truth.

Historically considered, the theory of evolution can be shown to have been not only speculative in its origin but theistic in its assumptions and tendencies. The physics of the last century knew nothing of organic interdependence, much less did it know anything of organic evolution. It was the mechanical philosophy of Descartes and Newton which furnished the premises from which the atheism of Von Holbach was reasoned. It is true he insisted on the distinction between dead and living matter, yet his living matter was only matter in motion. Our modern creative evolution and the unknowable absolute would never have been thought of had not Kant introduced the element of organic relationship with its implied theism for the second time into the arena of physics and metaphysics, and this just at the moment when chemistry, physiology, and palæontology stood ready to give to this more elevated medium of interpretation the verification of their splendid and almost bewildering discoveries. It follows that the new atheism of Physicus and Spencer builds on a philosophy which is essentially spiritual! if not theistic in its assumptions.

Leaving this point, as tempting us aside from the right line of discussion, we proceed to inquire whether the science of to-day, with its splendid discoveries and its magnificent generalizations, and the philosophy of to-day, with its organic relationships and evolutionary progress, are any more demonstrative of either atheism or agnosticism than were the science and philosophy of a century ago, as represented in the "System of Nature." For

convenience we separate the atheism of Physicus from the agnosticism of Spencer.

The first point which we notice is that the doctrines of the indestructibility of matter and the persistence of force, on which Physicus relies to set aside the necessity of a self-existent creator, are purely scientific conceptions, and as such pertain only to the finite universe. These ultimate generalizations are as truly limited propositions, and only concern a limited subject-matter, as do any of the special scientific conclusions that can be deduced from either. The fact that they explain every physical phenomenon, by a general affirmation of the force or the law which holds of each, only makes them more wonderful and comprehensive than the phenomena which they explain, but it does not for this reason take them out of the realm of the finite. If a scientific ultimate can satisfy the mind, it being finite, as the scientific atheist contends it must be in order to be understood and assented to, then the creed of an atheist of the school of Physicus must be, I believe in indestructible matter or in persistent force, in extent *m*, in powers *n*, and in laws *r*, all finite. So far science conducts him, and only so far. The instant he affirms any or all of these finites to be self-existent, he leaves the domain of science and steps over the boundary which divides it from the region beyond, whether this be called the domain of philosophy or the domain of faith. He does the same when he assumes the position of agnosticism pure and simple; *i.e.*, when he will neither affirm nor deny that man can know anything besides. Physicus himself confesses that his elaborate attempt to demonstrate that modern science can dispense with God only carries us to the bounds of the finite, to the *flammanitia mania mundi*, and that his magic formula of the persistence of force and the indestructibility of matter are purely scientific doctrines which concern the finite as we find it, and go no farther. He frankly admits that metaphysically a self-existent infinite is supposable; *i.e.*, it involves no inconsistency with scientific principles, conclusions, or experiments. With his purely metaphysical arguments for and against such an Infinite we have at present no concern. We are interested only in the question whether the position which he so triumphantly urges has any force, that modern science has enabled us to dispense with

a self-existent infinite by reason of its axioms or discoveries that matter is indestructible and force is persistent; whether, in brief, the new atheism of Physicus has any advantage over the old atheism of Von Holbach. We find that the universe of each is a finite, and only a finite. So far as either is claimed to be self-existent, it is claimed to be so not on grounds of science, but of philosophy or faith. More is known of the extent, the powers, and laws of the new universe than of the old. But we look in vain for the slightest evidence that the universe of matter and of spirit as known to the scientist of 1881, with its forces and its laws, with the history of its evolutions in the past so distinctly recorded and its prophecy of the developments in the future so clearly revealed, is, on grounds of philosophy, any the less dependent for its being and its order on a self-existent intelligent originator than the universe as known to the Encyclopædist of 1770, when as yet there was no chemistry, no geology, no spectroscopy, no Darwinism, and no Herbert Spencer!

Herbert Spencer, as all our readers should know, takes a position entirely different from that of Physicus in respect to the absolute or the unknowable force. He is not content with arguing back to the reality of such a force, on the grounds of science, nor with showing that indestructible matter and persistent force are interchangeable conceptions, but he is moved in his "First Principles" to inquire whether there is not or may not be besides an unknowable object of faith and worship. Confounding in his sudden zeal the scientific or unformulated unknowable (still finite) which evolution supposes, and which reveals itself in manifold phases or effects under changing and progressive conditions and laws—confounding this with that metaphysical absolute which theists had so long ignorantly worshipped in the form of a personal God, but which the new apostle solemnly says, *I now declare unto you*, and being especially moved with concern that Hamilton and Mansel should have been so rash as to deny the great Unknown whose altars are found everywhere—he proceeds to construct an elaborate argument to prove that such a metaphysical absolute exists. He finds evidence that he exists in that religious or metaphysical faith which is continually reaching after the *not-finite* or the ultra-scientific.

The evidence that he is unknowable he finds in the general truth that all *finite* force or matter is unknowable in its essence and is only known by its manifestations or effects, and therefore, by analogy or some sort of *salto mortale*, he concludes that the *infinite* beyond cannot be known. Q.E.D.!

We have considered these theories in detail that we might satisfactorily answer our main question; viz., whether faith in a self-existent and personal God is in danger of final collapse because of the discoveries of modern science, and especially by reason of the general popularity of the doctrine of evolution. We have compared the atheism of Von Holbach, so far as its logic is concerned, with the atheism of Physicus and the agnosticism of Spencer. We submit the question whether atheism has gained anything in its logic during the past century from the wonderful discoveries of modern science or from the suggestions which these discoveries have made to philosophy. The thought may occur to some that argument does not always win. We reply that if argument does not win in science and philosophy, nothing else can. We believe that argument always wins in the long-run, and that this was never so true as at the present time, when criticism was never so sharp and critics were never so numerous.

The temporary popularity of an imposing and ambiguous formula is no new event in the domain of science or philosophy. The only security or remedy against it for either scientists or philosophers is that both should become better logicians and never fail to remember that A is always A, and A can never be self-evolved into not-A. Let these time-honored rules be but faithfully applied and it will soon be discovered that both atheistic and agnostic evolutionism are products of a natural tendency in speculative men to hypostasize logical abstractions into real agents. If the same agent under varying conditions produces varying effects in any fixed order, these effects can very easily be conceived as developed from the agent which begins the series, provided the order be fixed and the phenomena are more and more varied and complex as they proceed. By the aid of modern science we find this progressive and intelligible order more and more signally manifested in the structure and past history of the universe itself, indicating and implying a plan which no single

scientist can grasp, and a history which no finite mind can remember or interpret. Science, moreover, being impossible without definition and classification, the moment we begin to think we aim to discover those forces and laws which are most comprehensive. These we naturally place highest in our logical scheme, i.e. first in the order of our explanation, as we follow the geometry, the thinking, the history, and the progress which all science unconsciously assumes must control the universe. We project on our logical maps and draw in our scientific sketch-books a hierarchy of conceptions, constructing our frameworks of outlined *abstracta* according to our theory of nature's operations and their rationalized order. Into this diagram we write as fast as we may our hierarchy of genera and species, of families and varieties, as fast as observation or experiment will warrant. As our logical tree is developed under our hand by twos and twos, in ramifications and sub-ramifications, it is not surprising that we poetically imagine that the genus *originates* the species, and the species is *transformed* into the variety by an inherent force belonging not to the individual agent but to its abstract counterpart. Finding, moreover, in the world of life of both plant and animal that the boundary lines which we had drawn between our species are neither so definite nor so rigid as had been supposed, we necessarily correct our observations by ascribing to the organic power of the individual agents, whether material or spiritual, a greater flexibility to varying conditions, and to environment a corresponding modifying power. Finding also in the progressive history of the generations of life ample evidence of progressive variations from simple to complex forms, with corresponding advances from lower to higher endowments, we necessarily find in the original germs or molecules, whatever these may be, a sensitiveness to varying circumstances such as had never been dreamed of under the old hierarchies of genera and species. When, with these results, we go back again to our familiar and time-honored logical schemes, it is not surprising that by an unconscious hypostasis we ascribe to the logical genus or species the capacity of perpetually differentiating itself into sub-species or varieties, and of fixing these results in more or less stable subordinates; or, conversely, that we assert for individual agents a limitless and planless capacity to affect and be affected

by its fellows. Hence have originated two forms of development or evolution. Hegelianism was first in order, which, out of the splendid poetry of Schelling, constructed its logical universe by the development or evolution of every form of the concrete by means of the self-moving and self-differentiating power of abstract notions; beginning with Being and ending with the most complicated agent that is destined to exist in nature and the most consummate event that shall occur in history, uniformly finding a self-existent Infinite in the organic total of the whole that has been and is and is to be. Next emerged materialistic evolution, which begins its apparently infinite yet actually finite cycle with the seemingly impotent and unpromising star-dust that has within itself the potency and promise of all the highest forms of life, and ends with the completed possibilities of these wondrous agencies in a universe that signalizes its finished perfection by falling into a chaos in whose ruins are the elements of renewed development and order. These two forms of evolution, the logical and the biological, are alike in their genesis and their essential features. The logic of both is substantially the same. The Hegelian or metaphysical evolutionism has had its day. Tho it has not ceased to exert its special fascinations upon men of special culture, it has lost its power to dogmatize in the name of either philosophy or science. Biological evolutionism is at present especially noisy and pretentious, and claims to furnish both foundation and method for every science of nature and of man. The first saves both philosophy and science, but sinks man's free and personal life into the abyss of logical necessity. The second subjects not only personality but science itself to the uncertainties of blind materialism. For the time, materialistic and biological evolutionism will doubtless have special fascinations for men of limited culture and dogmatic temper. It is our belief that so soon as the logic of time shall convince those men who know how to reason that this form of evolutionism not only destroys faith but strangles science, they will reject it with contempt if not with abhorrence.

But while we contend that logic in the long-run is destined to win, we concede that many other elements decide the question whether it will conquer sooner or later. The convincing force of an argument or theory is one thing, and the conviction

which it produces or fails to produce is another. We may not judge of the strength or weakness of faith in a community or a period solely by the logical strength or weakness of its accepted philosophy. In former times, says Coleridge, principles were better than the men, nowadays the men are better than their principles. This is as true of the actual as contrasted with the theoretic faiths of men as it is of their characters as compared with their creeds. We find abundant reasons for believing that many scientists and philosophers are by no means so atheistic or agnostic in their actual thinking as their speculative avowals and reasonings would seem to imply. There is certainly no lack in the confidence, if it be not sometimes the bravado or effrontery, with which the agnostics of our time propound their conclusions and their reasons for holding them. The coolness with which they assert that the new doctrines solve all the mysteries of matter and spirit, of life and organization, and the confidence with which they dispose of creation and design are equally refreshing. The bravery also with which they profess their readiness to accept any martyrdom for their most hallowed convictions to which they may be called by their loyalty to science is also imposing, if it is not inspiring. We observe a difference, however, between the outspoken and plucky antagonism of the old materialistic atheism and the half-reluctant consent which many of our negative thinkers affect as they accept the conclusions to which science compels them or the blushing euphemisms with which they utter their half-extorted confessions of unbelief or blasphemy. The imaginative mysticism with which the new atheism drapes the hideous idols of negation is another indication that the scientific unbelief of our day is less hearty, less positive, and less self-satisfied than were the coarser and rougher denials of other times. These phenomena are not difficult to be reconciled with the more accurate knowledge and the higher cultivation of the times in which we live. They are exactly what we ought to look for in a period distinguished by intense activity in limited spheres of observation and sagacious and splendid generalizations within the wide ranges of hypothesis and speculation. The habit of careful observation engenders confidence as well as caution. The successful confirmation of a few happy conjectures may inflate to a

romantic reliance on the most improbable hypotheses. In this way the sense of obligation to logical coherence may become gradually relaxed, the judgment concerning the true and the real be enervated, and the universe of tremendous fact be transformed into any unreal phantasmagoria of speculation which may illustrate or confirm some newly broached imaginative theory. Faith in moral and religious truth, on the other hand, tho intellectual in its activity and its grounds, is in its very essence intensely realistic and practical. It is not necessarily carefully adjusted even by men of high intellectual culture to their scientific or philosophical theories, and hence it is not always helped or hindered by either so seriously as would seem to be inevitable. The fact is certainly unquestioned that orthodox and even ultra-orthodox Christian believers not infrequently accept a theory of the universe which is utterly atheistic or agnostic, or a doctrine of man that is hopelessly materialistic, with little or no interruption to a fervent Christian experience.

II. This distinction between the logical and practical faiths of men forces itself upon our attention as we proceed to our next topic and inquire what we ought to think of the *ethical theories and tendencies* of our times. That many of these theories are eminently dangerous and destructive no man can possibly deny. Viewed from a purely logical stand-point, nothing seems more clear than that every theory of ethics which is derived from materialistic evolutionism must deprive moral obligation of its permanence and sacredness. The utmost that any can do is to enforce the most sacred duties of life, by associations which are confessed to be factitious in so far as they are creatures of social forces. Every such theory must resolve the authority of duty itself into the right of the strongest to compel by the bayonet when directed by science and wisdom, or by the shouts and jeers of an ignorant and brutal mob. It finds the original rudiments of conscience in the dread of the war-club and the bludgeon. "The imperious word *ought*," says Mr. Charles Darwin, "seems merely to imply the consciousness of the existence of a persistent instinct either innate or partly acquired." A matured and cultured conscience is only that inextricable web of associations which society weaves about every one of its members for

and against the impulses which it chooses or finds necessary to encourage or repress as society rises or sinks. These associations form the conscience of the individual into a swift witness *against*, or it may be *for*, murder and lust and violence. The law of duty supposed by the older atheists and deists to be written upon the heart of man so clearly as to need no enforcement or authority from the voice of God is now held to be written on the brain through physiological agencies, which when hardened by social repetitions are transmitted by the hereditary force of a thousand generations. It is assumed indeed that this social movement must be upward and onward—from the lower to the higher, from the worse to the better—but without reason. These theorists seem never to have asked themselves, and no reason is provided in the facts and analogies of the system, why some interruption of development may not produce a single brain of mighty force, seething with the impulses of murder and lawlessness, that shall break the force of heredity and cast out the better conscience from its brain-shell, and proclaim to the willing multitude some new law of license in the name of some newly developed theory of property, the state, or social order. The advocates of the new ethics are professed logicians and practised reasoners, who pride themselves on their coherent thinking and the unflinching courage with which they adhere to the logic of their convictions. And yet they show no timidity for themselves or their fellows lest these consequences should be acted out in some drama of terrific horror by men whose associations are not yet rightly or strongly adjusted, or lest a new code of scientific communism, murder, and lust should be thrust up into their own lecture-rooms from the hell which lies beneath, or be enforced upon the community by the law of the bludgeon or the shouts of a maddened public sentiment. Spectators and critics who do not accept these opinions are filled with alarm as they follow out the logic of these new ethics, for to them the logic is as direct and as cruel as the ball of the rifle towards its mark. But their advocates and exponents are as cool and unconcerned about these or any consequences as if they were tracing the path of a blank cartridge or the orbit of an asteroid. The story is credited of Voltaire that on a certain occasion the conversation at his table was becoming somewhat free in respect

to God and immortality, when he suddenly rose and locked his servants out of the room, saying that he did not care to be murdered or robbed as the consequence of the free theories which might be expounded in his own house. Our modern theorists would esteem such a precaution eminently unscientific and puerile. Even the atheists of the last century held with a sort of fervor to permanent laws of nature in favor of temperance and kindness and courtesy, which enabled them to dispense with God. But the atheists of the modern school make duty to be the chance and changing growth of a society of humans who have slowly struggled upwards from brutes to men and may at any moment exalt into a law of duty what strain of brute or devil still lurks in their blood.

We think it right to argue that were the faith of the new theorists as earnest as it purports to be, they would not and could not be so indifferent as they are to these possible consequences. It would seem that they must inevitably recoil from them with terror for themselves and for their kind. It would scarcely be courteous to assert that they are not serious in holding their premises. It would be positively discourteous to insinuate that they do not understand the necessary conclusions of their own logic. How then may we explain the fact that they either do not forecast or do not fear the practical consequences to which their premises lead? A partial explanation may be found in the suggestion that scientific speculation in these times seems to be practised in some sort as a species of diversion or exercise of ingenuity—a setting up of one hypothesis against another in the way of logical pastime, with now and then a flight of poetic enthusiasm enlivened with a sharp hit, not always in the best temper, against theologians. If this is true, speculation has become less dangerous to practical faith in duty simply because it is less earnest as it becomes more audacious,—seeming more brave, in proportion as it lacks the courage of its own convictions.

Another and more satisfactory solution is found in the fact that ethical truth shines so clearly by its own light, and stands so strongly upon its own foundations, as to be regarded by theorists of every description as practically unassailable. Even the advocates of the most destructive theories justify their

audacity by the secret conviction that moral truth in the long-run can never suffer from any assault of science. Accordingly not a few reasoners who pride themselves on the rigor of their logic and the sharpness of their analysis take refuge from their own deductions in some convenient shelter of faith or feeling. They would fain save their faith in duty from the scientific assaults which they themselves make upon its supremacy, by some special *Te Deum* of sentimental worship in their private chapel of common humanity or common sense. We do not defend the reasonableness of this divided allegiance. We simply notice the fact as explaining how faith in duty can be made to survive the destructive influence of the most dangerous theories, and why active religious convictions seem to be able to exist in some minds along with an anti-religious philosophy. We are forced to adopt some such theory in order to explain some of the strange incongruities of our times. In this speculative age many believe more earnestly in duty and in goodness than their theories provide for, and seem to hold their shallow and destructive ethics more as exercises for scientific ingenuity than with the spirit of martyr-like or even of manly conviction. The negative theories of morals which are so zealously defended would be more dangerous were the disbelief more positive and earnest. Scientific frivolity, however, is a poor excuse, and yet it may be the best excuse which can be given for the unbelieving and destructive ethics of the day.

We are arrested at this point by the wide reach of the discussion which we have undertaken. The questions which we have considered thus far relate to the metaphysical and ethical foundations of faith and are necessarily speculative. Those which remain concern its object matter and are in their nature popular.

* NOAH PORTER.

PATRONAGE MONOPOLY AND THE PENDLETON BILL.

EVERY great reform in administration requires not only better methods, but a better political education. Thus far that cause has been best served by making the development of a more intelligent public opinion in its behalf the direct and supreme object. Such was the aim of our last article upon the subject.¹

There has been so much ignorance, such pessimistic indifference, and a chronic hopelessness of anything better so pervading, that it has required years to awaken even the better classes to a sense of the peril and of the possibilities of its removal. The educational work of reform is now well advanced. Thoughtful men now, confident in the cause and ready for practical measures, are almost ashamed to admit that only two or three years ago they doubted and stood aloof if they did not sneer. Clergymen, seeing more clearly than before how great a part of all our crime and corruption springs from bad men in office and the venality of its bestowal, are more and more feeling that, without entering into party politics, there is an unoccupied field of duty for them, and are entering it to raise their voice for official morality and public virtue.

Members of Congress are beginning to speak in their places, without fear, for the growing cause. The teachers and the friends of the public schools are comprehending how far the triumph of that cause would contribute to their prosperity. The higher literature in vast predominance and more and more of the promising patriotic young men are on its side. It is

¹ "Assassination and the Spoils System," September, 1881.

doubtful whether, eighteen months ago, a single member of Congress would have been willing to raise his voice for an effective bill in aid of Civil Service reform. Now we may expect several of the foremost of either party to speak for such a measure. To the strength which the intrinsic justice of a cause commands from an intelligent people there is now being added that which comes from numbers and speaks in formidable petitions. Reform associations are at work at thirty or more of the centres of political activity. Young politicians even are considering which side of a reform policy will be strongest where a few years hence they will want votes.

There may be zigzags, but the line of progress is to be ascending. When the popularity of Mr. James—due solely to business ability and reform methods, which gave the people of New York a better postal service than they had ever imagined—made him Postmaster-General and enabled him to drive out the public plunderers, all candid, thoughtful minds recognized a new and higher power in our politics. And when his report, as Postmaster-General, declared his sense of the great need of enforcing in the postal service generally the same competitive examinations which had been so salutary at the New York office, there was a profound regret that so great a reform was checked and so invaluable an administrator was lost.

With whatever delight the old chiefs and spoilsmen saw a new collector go into the New York Custom-House—for no apparent good cause, I must think—they too began to appreciate that new power when they found the abominated competitive examinations were still enforced, and that not a place was open to a mere henchman, flunky, or factionist. All the more was that new power manifest to everybody when the Chamber of Commerce of the city of New York, with the applause of its best citizenship and its best journals, sent a formal delegation to the new collector, requesting him, in the interest of commerce, to stand by the reform: and he promised to do so. That promise he has kept, if indeed he is not a convert to the merit system he enforces.

Turning from the work of education, let us consider what legislation will be most useful and what practical methods it should provide for.

A glance shows us that the evils to be removed—even the portion which may be brought within the range of legislation—are too varied and complex to be embraced within a single law. The wise general does not scatter his forces along the whole frontier or lay siege to all the strongholds of his enemy at the same time. He concentrates where he can be the strongest and where his victory will be most decisive.

In the article referred to several great evils—in a measure detached, yet each a part of the spoils system and fit to be made at the proper time the subject of legislation—were pointed out. It was there shown that the reform sought would not arrest the healthy activity of parties, but would allow their majorities to elect the President, the Governors, the members of Congress and of the State legislatures, who would make all laws and guide all policy in harmony with the principles approved by the votes of the people; but that it would prevent executive subordinates who are not representative officers, and whose political opinions are not material for the fit discharge of their duties, from being made the spoils of party victory or the electioneering henchmen of party chieftains. We shall get a clearer view as to the legislation which should be first attempted if we make a general survey.

1. There is the disastrous control of the appointing power of the Executive, usurped in later years by the Senate under the pretence of confirmation, whereby the President has in large measure lost and the Senate has in the same measure gained—and generally in a partisan spirit exercises—a dictatorial control over the appointments and removals directly of the about 3500 subordinates of the higher class in the Executive Department who are subject to confirmation, and whereby Senators indirectly control the appointment and removal of tens of thousands of those in yet lower grades, being among others the clerks, carriers, and deputies at post-offices, custom-houses, and revenue-offices: thus destroying the counterpoise of the departments and threatening the stability of the Government.

2. There is the usurped control by members of the House of many of the appointments above named and of others,—the division of the patronage between Senators and Representatives being based on nothing better than barter, influence, and mani-

pulation,—and including the selection of cadets for the schools at West Point and Annapolis, which the members of the House take as their perquisites and generally refuse to merit. The places thus controlled are very generally used to oblige favorites and henchmen, or to carry their own election; and as a natural consequence the heads of departments and the President are besieged, bullied, and importuned (as that article explained) for vacancies to be apportioned among members.

3. There is the general prostitution of the power of selecting and discharging their own subordinates on the part of postmasters, collectors, and other heads of offices sharing such power, for the purpose of gaining the favor of Senators, Congressmen, and great politicians, and in order to make sure of their own reappointment, or in the way of conferring favors on relatives, dependants, and electioneering agents.

4. There is the great evil of political assessments, to extort which the partisan leaders and the more unscrupulous officials unite their power in levying taxes from the salaries of the more humble servants of the Government, under fears of removal, in order to get money to be used to enable partisan manipulators and their confederated followers to manage politics in their own way without dependence upon the support of the general membership of the party, and without the need of allowing that publicity of their doings which would disclose their corrupt practices and despotic methods.

5. There is the evil of the four years' term of office, which has added greatly to inefficiency, corruption, and party despotism,—unknown until the Act of 1820,—for subordinates in the Executive Department; that law first disclosing the strength of the spoils-system elements which caused proscriptive removals under Jackson, and for the first time, in 1836, gave a four-years' term to postmasters—that is, to those whose compensation is one thousand dollars a year or over—thus bringing their appointments into the Senate for confirmation, and involving them—that is, the nearly 1900 now having that compensation—in the Presidential contests.

6. There is also the abuse of neglecting official duties, and using official authority and influence for the purpose of controlling conventions, coercing elections, and compelling the be-

stowal of votes in the interest of factions and their venal leaders, through which abuse great politicians and officers having the power of appointment and removal—or the power of confirmation, to which the former has been subjected—have been able to substantially dictate the political action of cities, districts, and States.

Few persons knowing the strength of the spoils system will question the need of concentrating the attack. But where should it begin? How much should be attempted at first?

There are about 82,000 Federal officials who are appointed by their superior officers, and in whose selection therefore the people have no part. There are in addition a much larger number—perhaps from 200,000 to 250,000—of State and municipal officers who are also appointed.

With a few exceptions, the power of removal and of discipline attends the power of selection. A few of these officials serve in the halls of legislation and in the courts. The residue belong to the Executive Department. The annual salaries of these 82,000 Federal officers amount to about \$50,000,000, and they constitute more than *eight tenths of all the officials in the national service*. The President, the Vice-President, and the members of the House are the only Federal officials whom the people select. All others are selected by other officers. No statute, but only the better public opinion and a sense of duty,—if happily for the people either be recognized,—impose any condition of fidelity upon their choice. Here is the vast sphere of discretion—of irresponsible power—under our government, upon which its character and efficiency largely depend.

The duties of all but the highest of these appointed officials are essentially ministerial, the same continually whatever party is in power. They have no honest relations with party politics. The Constitution calls them “inferior officers.” There are about 3500 of them who hold under four-years’ terms, and who are subject to confirmation by the Senate. They have the more responsible duties, and generally—as in the case of postmasters and collectors—have an absolute or a qualified authority for selecting and discharging their own subordinates. The lower the grade the less discretion the official has. To a candid mind it is plain that a postmaster or collector has no official relations

with politics; yet all our politicians treat even the clerks and messengers of these officers as the servants and propagandists of parties and factions.

In the article before referred to, it was shown to be as clear in the light of history as it is in the light of principle, that the power of appointment and removal is as much a public trust as the offices themselves; that there is no right to appoint any but the worthy and competent, nor to remove, except for causes grounded solely in the public welfare. All other appointments or removals, knowingly made,—and consequently all removals by a public officer for personal and party purposes,—are as clearly breaches of public trust as it would be to wilfully accept base coin for taxes, or to use public money from the treasury for party objects. The rule of duty and the guilt of its violation are the same, however more difficult detection and punishment may be in one case than in the other. He who appoints an unworthy judge, revenue collector, appraiser, or letter-carrier, may cause injustice and injury a hundred times greater than he who robs an estate, embezzles the city funds, or breaks open a letter.

The most central fact and force in the degradation of our civil service is the prostitution of this power of appointment and removal. Being a power incident to other functions more prominent in the eyes of the people—for no officer is selected merely to appoint or remove others—its abuse is overshadowed and little noticed. The people have not yet comprehended that the power of the President, the heads of departments, and even of great postmasters and collectors, which most affects the citizen and the safety of the nation, is not that of directing the public business, but that of dispensing a vast patronage—selecting and removing hundreds, thousands, or tens of thousands of subordinates whose character and action for good or evil are felt at every point of private life. The exercise of this power is generally as secret as the vast combinations of private selfishness and partisan influence by which that exercise is so often bribed or coerced. We can see in the past the injustice of the use of this power for the benefit of royal families, aristocracies, state churches and hierarchies, but we do not yet see that its use in this republic to support parties, factions, chieftains, senators, and great and little politicians, is no more defensible.

Nothing, I repeat, is so central, so pervading, so disastrous in our administrative affairs, as the abuse of that power—its audacious, long-continued rebellion against the Constitution, the plain duties of office, and the moral obligations of politics. Since Jackson's time, it has been treated rather as a perquisite and a partisan prerogative, than as a public trust.

This great authority thus used—or rather the opportunity thus to prostitute it by giving offices and salaries as bribes and favors—is the *vast power of patronage in our politics*; that power for which every official is anxious in the degree that he is venal; that power upon which every party relies in the degree that it is weak in principles and virtues. In every grade in the vast range of official life, from the President who appoints to the humblest lighthouse or signal-station keeper allowed to employ an assistant, there is a portion of this patronage, and a dozen or a hundred engaged in a fierce competition of influence for its exercise in their favor. Every postmaster with the patronage of employing ten or a hundred clerks must confront a hundred or a thousand persons who hustle and intrigue for those places—each backed by political and personal influence. Every revenue collector with the authority of nominating his subordinates is besieged by great numbers of merciless, clamorous office-seekers, each insisting that his claims upon favor and his influence in the party most deserve a place. The President, every head of department, and even some chiefs of bureaus, are pressed, threatened, and implored by great numbers of office-seekers, who bring letters, petitions, Congressmen, and not infrequently considerable delegations, in order to exert an over-awing influence for appointments. When we read in a morning journal that “three fourths of the time of the President is occupied in hearing applications for office,” the explanation is that Senators, Representatives, great politicians, and a miscellaneous rabble of office-seekers threaten and importune him for office; when ex-Secretary Windom declared that “for the last hundred days a few thousand men in search of office had taken nine tenths of the time of the President and his cabinet;” when members of Congress tell us that a single mail sometimes brings them from twenty to a hundred letters about appointing or removing a single postmaster or collector; when General Garfield

declared to his fellow-members of Congress that in their pursuit of their pretended share of this patronage they "crowd the doors, fill the corridors, . . . and press for appointments until the public business is obstructed;" when the Governor of New York, committees of Congress, and Presidents of the United States tell us that one third to one fourth more officials are foisted into the public service than are needed—in presence of such facts we can begin to comprehend that the prostitution of the power of appointment and removal is the great centre and source of corruption and despotism in our politics.

But not even the worst parts of this abuse are to be found in what takes place directly between the office-seeker and the office-giver, but rather in the official servility, the pledges to work for factions and to vote for chieftains, and in the discouragement and defeat of independent manhood and noble and pure aims and efforts which such use of patronage causes.

In the contests we have just seen before the President or in the Senate about postmasters and custom officers at Norfolk, Wilmington, Cincinnati, and elsewhere, and in the great issue made by Mr. Conkling over the collectorship at New York, —an office with more than twelve hundred subordinates,—the real object of contention was not so much the superior officers as the thousands of subordinates who could be assessed to fill the party treasury, who could be disciplined into obedient lieutenants of chieftains and factions, who could be threatened with removal as a basis for controlling the votes of thousands seeking their places.

Nor is this all. The great mass of unjustifiable removals are made to furnish patronage for chieftains and places for their favorites and dependants. Once make it certain that the most worthy claimant—and he is pretty sure to be neither a sycophant nor a partisan—will secure the vacant place, and there will be little pushing to create vacancies. As things now are, the pressing out of an officer is the pressing in of a favorite or a henchman.

The bringing of the exercise of the appointing power under fit rules of duty would also go far toward suppressing political assessments. The servility that inclines to endure them is the growth of spoil-system tyranny. The fears that enforce

their payment come from the dread of arbitrary removals. No man who gains his place in a manly way by reason of his own merits, and who feels he cannot be expelled without fault, will consent to be made one of a distinct class and to pay an insulting tax merely because a band of partisans chose to demand it. He will tell them he is as free as any other to pay or refuse his money in aid of a campaign or a political creed—a liberty now almost unknown in our official life. He will have the courage to declare that the justice and dignity of the nation forbid that those in its service shall be the subjects of a taxation more despotic than any which King Charles or King James ever attempted to enforce.

But the evil is not measured by the fact that a power given in trust for all has been converted into a propaganda of parties, that a public function has been degraded into an official perquisite, or that selfish interest and influence have been substituted for justice and duty, as the standards of official action. For, out of the vicious patronage thus created and the official favoritism which has dispensed it, there has grown a vast despotic and corrupting *monopoly*, founded in usurpation and wielded for the advantage of the few at the expense of the many.

Only the mildest part of this monopoly appears when the party in power makes the acceptance of its creed a test for each of the more than eighty thousand ministerial places, in which political opinions are no more important than religious or social opinions. A phase only a little more despotic is disclosed when trained officials of one party are removed to make places for ignorant partisans of the other. Still more savage parts of the monopoly appear when one faction of a party shuts the gates of office against all the other factions of the same party—when, as was the case for many years at the New York Custom-House, each faction in turn, upon its capture of that office, drove out more than half the public servants there for the double purpose of revenge upon its rivals and spoils for its camp-followers. But this is not the worst. The final power over patronage—the real monopolists—are the chieftains of factions and the unscrupulous holders of high offices, who contend together for every place in a vicious competition of greed and demagogic influence, in which the principles of parties and the

welfare of the people are equally disregarded. The men most pushed by the monopolists are very generally, at least, those who have been most servile, who have done the most questionable work, who give promise of being most useful in the future to the great lords of Monopoly. As a rule, under the spoils system, those only are considered for places who come with the approval of these monopoly lords :

“ I am his highness' dog at Kew;
Pray tell me, sir, whose dog are you ?”

It is this discrimination in favor of servility, this barrier against independent thought and manly self-respect, which have caused so many in the lower offices to be submissive workers and cringing assessment-payers, and so many in the higher to be arrogant manipulators and domineering chieftains.

If a subordinate place is to be filled in a city government, where that system prevails, it is not the mayor or head of the office who can fill it, but some ward politician—some lesser Tweed—a part of whose monopoly it is. If a vacancy exists, or is to be made, in a custom-house or a department, not the collector or the head of that department, but a Senator, Representative, or some other patronage potentate, to whose share of monopoly that place has fallen, or who has won it in the grand competition of influence, fills it—fills it from his long roll of followers as a feudal lord would give spoils won in battle. It is these monopolists who are the inveterate and natural enemies of civil-service reform, and especially of competitive examinations, which would allow them no more prizes. They profess to act in the interest of their party, but they would be little less hostile to competitive examinations open only to all the members of their party. The monopolist excludes all but his followers. With a few exceptions, every subordinate—municipal, State, and Federal alike, where the spoils system prevails—is apportioned among the great and little chiefs of patronage. Whenever a prize falls to one of them, a fierce competition of intrigue and influence among his vassals takes place. I can conceive of nothing behind the curtains of party politics that would be more interesting than a disclosure of this apportionment with the long train of growling or whining followers of every great

patronage-monger, who are held in servility by the hope of crumbs from this monopoly. Before the reform of such abuses in Great Britain, there was an officer at the Treasury called the "Patronage Secretary." Books were regularly kept by him in which the share of the monopoly apportioned to each member of Parliament was credited to him and the places he had received were charged. We have developed the full measure of the evil, but not the courage to thus mitigate it. Our monopolists prefer to wrangle and intrigue among themselves over their shares, cheating each other as they have the people.

But there are yet more disastrous effects of patronage monopoly. That repudiation of the Constitution and of moral obligations of the officer through which a prostituted power of appointment and removal opened official places to mere influence and corruption, also caused an invasion of the executive by the legislative part of the government. That careful division of duties and counterpoise of power between these two departments, which is at once the evidence of political wisdom and the surest guarantee of good government and stability, has been greatly impaired. Members of Congress, of State legislatures, and of municipal councils have usurped executive authority by dictating appointments, coercing removals, and degrading confirmations into bargains and pledges. Madison declared in the *Federalist* that the accumulation of legislative and executive powers in the same hands was the "very definition of tyranny."

Congress can fix all salaries, limit all expenditures, and define the functions of all departments and bureaus. Thus the Executive is held in check. But the great duty of the Executive to see that the laws are faithfully executed can be fitly discharged only when he can select, discipline, and remove his subordinates.

It is a supreme duty of Congress to insist on economy, and to pass fit laws to prevent abuses in administration. But how is that to be done when the members' monopoly of appointments tempts them to fix high salaries, to foist their incompetent favorites upon the pay-rolls, and to promise places for votes? In the article before mentioned, examples were given of office-seekers—even women—boldly advertising in the public journals of Washington that they would give a fifth of their salary, and back it with "congressional influence," for places in the depart-

ments. The first steps of reform must be the suppression of this monopoly of members. It is a usurpation in all its parts. Besides disarming members of the courage and independence for their duties, it has made thousands of ministerial places dependent upon their favor, and forced those who fill them to do the dirtiest work, to pay the heaviest taxes, and cast the most servile votes, at the congressional elections.

Philosophically considered, the ultimate causes of such evils are a defective political education and low morality in politics. In that view the supreme remedy is apparent. Yet a great deal can be done before the remedy of a better education can be applied. The great improvements already made at the New York Post-Office and Custom-House are proof of this. But we must reach *the exercise of the power* of appointment and removal itself, and not merely details of its abuses. We must bring that power again into subjection to justice and the Constitution—as it was at the beginning.

Why not attempt this directly by penal statute, declaring its use in aid of chieftains, parties, or monopolists a crime? Within certain limits, this may and should be done, as it has been in Great Britain. But the offences would be too difficult to prove and too numerous for punishment to warrant chief reliance upon penal prohibition. Besides, there is a remedy far more easily applied and far more effective, popular, and beneficent in its nature. It is a remedial method—not a panacea, not a complete remedy even—by which the officers and salaries which are vital to the spoils system and the very substance of patronage monopoly will be conferred upon the basis of character and justice. It is a method which in practice will be a school of popular education in its own spirit.

We shall better understand this method if we first glance at the common rights of the people—the basis of all just claims upon office and hence the only righteous conditions of its bestowal. President Jackson in a message declared the equal right of every citizen to office, yet in practice he excluded not merely every one not of his party, but all of his own party except those most servile to himself. The first to enforce patronage monopoly, yet, strange repugnance, he was the first to proclaim a communistic doctrine of equal rights to office.

There is, in an absolute sense, no right to office, but only a claim upon it measured by personal fitness for its duties. Every citizen's claim upon office is strong in proportion to the character and capacity he can bring to the discharge of its functions. The only rights we can predicate is the right of the most worthy to have the office, and the right of the people (1) to have him appointed, and (2) to have him retained so long as he remains both competent and efficient. A life tenure is neither just nor practicable; neither children nor dotards can do the public work. The voters judge for themselves when they elect. But no officer who appoints a public servant has any right to disregard such claims or to reject the most worthy. Even the Koran condemns the ruler who, when he appoints an officer, knows a more worthy citizen who would accept the place. We need to make it as clear as the principles of justice and morality which are involved, that when any but the most worthy is appointed, there is not only a breach of a public trust, but a plain wrong done, directly to the more worthy who are rejected, and indirectly to the whole people whose rights and interests are disregarded. These principles are the true basis of official life in a republic, standing in marked contrast with the privileges of families, classes, State churches and hierarchies, which are the foundations of patronage monopoly in aristocratic states. Let the people comprehend those principles, and need we doubt that they will insist on their observance?

Nevertheless, we are confronted with the difficulties of the selection of the best, especially for places in the great departments and large post-offices and custom-houses, the heads of which have no time for ascertaining the facts and can know by sight but a few among the hundreds or thousands of their subordinates. In the small offices, only indifference or the wilful refusal to select the best can enable the monopolists to rule; but in the great offices, the complexity of affairs and this lack of time and information both facilitate the monopolists and screen their corrupt trade. Besides, partisan terrorism and corruption are greatest at the great political centres where the largest offices are situated. Yet upon the character and capacity of the vast army of subordinates—upon the selection of the most worthy applicants—the efficiency, economy, and purity of

the administration and in large measure the popular education and the moral tone of politics depend. Such facts make it a condition of national safety, and hence a national duty, to provide every possible safeguard for the just use of the appointing power. The temptations to its abuse, the difficulties of using it wisely, and the perils from its prostitution will increase with every million added to our population and wealth.

The older nations, and especially Great Britain half a century ago, have felt the need of aiding and enlightening the appointing power. Examinations were made of those seeking appointments, covering the character, the general information, and special knowledge needed for doing the public work. Their utility speedily appeared. The most unworthy were weeded from the pressing crowd of office-seekers. Before 1850, the value of this method had been clearly shown in Great Britain and the other European states. We adopted it for our departments at Washington. The statutes of 1853 and 1855 forbid appointments until after such examinations, and these statutes are still enforced. No one can be appointed for these departments until he has been examined as to qualification; and such is the practice as to admissions to the national schools at West Point and Annapolis. Such tests have been as beneficial in our service as in that of the older nations. The ability to test superior capacity for the public service by examinations, the need of such tests, and the fact that influence and recommendations utterly fail to supply them, *are therefore not now open questions*. All doubt on these points has been concluded by a continuous experience in all the foremost nations for more than thirty years. We need not stop to inquire whether the demagogues and patronage-mongers, who sneer at questions as fanciful and who denounce examinations as useless, are therefore more noticeable for ignorance or for audacity. Their affected witticisms were stale in England twenty-five years ago. But, who expects men to be candid judges of what threatens their monopoly or reproves their usurpations? When was not ridicule attempted where reason was wanting?

While arresting the grosser abuses of patronage monopoly, the earlier examinations were too defective to break it up. Mr.

Mill said that in England they only arrested the dunces; and for these reasons, which are equally true here:

1. The examinations were not comparative or competitive, but were mere "pass" or "test" examinations of single office-seekers. Outside influence or inside official favor brought forward one from the crowd to be tested for the vacancy. There were no means of ascertaining relative merits, no facility for selecting the best. The patronage-mongers and monopolists aided each other in pushing their single favorites past the isolated Board of Examiners.

2. The examining boards were mere clerks or heads of bureaus in the departments—as they still are with us—with no prestige, independence, or authority for standing up against pressure or enforcing a high standard. They had neither cooperation nor union among themselves. Especially in our service, their own places were daily at the peril of the great politicians, officers, and monopolists whose incompetent vassals and favorites they were expected to arrest at the gates of office. A bankrupt cousin or troublesome dependant is pushed all the more because unable to take care of himself.

3. But most important of all, there were no provisions that would secure to any but such vassals, favorites, and henchmen—to any but those labelled and recommended by the patronage monopolists themselves—either a right or an opportunity of being examined at all. If the examiners were fearful of their own fate, as they generally were, only the mere dunderheads were kept out; and at best the same old monopolists kept all the places for their minions, even when the worst were excluded.

Not a few very worthy men are even thus pushed in—some because they were thought worthy, but more perhaps in ignorance of their worth. We can see why the monopolists and politicians made no great ado about such examinations. Now when the reform threatens more effective tests, they incline even to praise "pass" examinations.

A little experience rendered it plain that the old monopoly, made more respectable by having the worst of its camp-followers thus cast out, could flourish continually under such examinations. It was not less clear that what was needed for a real reform was

to open the examinations, and hence the gates of office, to all persons of apparent capacity, regardless of politics, influence, and all the labels and threats of the monopolists. The way must be made open, free, and clear for all, on the same terms, to prove, if they could, that they were the most worthy to hold office. In the language of Mr. Gladstone, "the public service must be made public." The monopoly would be destroyed by restoring to the people the common opportunities of which the monopolists had deprived them.

Some examinations in Great Britain had, in a small way, been opened to all by heads of bureaus in mere self-defence, as early I think as 1850. The superior officers which such examinations secured were manifest from the beginning. The labelled favorites of the monopolists—the superannuated stewards, the electioneering henchmen, the muddle-headed cousins and flunkies of members of Parliament, lords, bishops, and great politicians, which made up a majority of them—were easily distanced by the young men of courage, character, and capacity who, for the first time, could *offer themselves* for examination. The monopolists became ashamed of the disgraceful record of their favorites. Public opinion on the part of the intelligent, untitled citizens soon began to be strong,—as it is now growing strong with us, in favor of free, open examinations,—for these fivefold reasons: (1) that they were founded in justice: (2) that they crushed an odious monopoly: (3) that they give better officers for the people: (4) that they opened a free way to office for their sons; (5) that they powerfully stimulated popular education.

As soon as the examinations were made open and free, it was as easy as it was natural to examine many together, so that their merits could be compared and the best of all applicants could be selected. To refuse to ascertain and take the best, from those seeking places through examinations, would have been to repudiate the principles and records on which all examinations are based. The middle and lower classes rejoiced as much as the monopolists and aristocrats grumbled at these triumphs of justice and intelligence over birthright and monopoly. It is but just, however, to say that true statesmen among the nobility aided this republican reform—a more disinterested patriotism and a higher courage than have yet been shown by

our lords of politics. For English lords and bishops were called upon to surrender not merely patronage monopoly, but special privileges enjoyed for centuries—the very foundations of the House of Lords and the state church.

These later examinations, thus made open and free, which tested *comparative* fitness, which broke down the barriers of monopoly and made all patronage-mongers, labels, and recommendations useless—which are the vital part of that new system which makes superior merits the supreme criterion for appointment in a royal and aristocratic state—these are the renowned “Competitive Examinations”—the horror of every partisan, every monopolist, every unscrupulous officer clothed with the appointing power which he wishes to prostitute.

Competitive examinations do not require any peculiarity in the questions. They may be as easy or as difficult under one form of examination as under another. But the very process of a competition of merit strongly tends to raise the standard. Allowing every one the same opportunities, competitive examinations bring the merits of many into comparison in order that the government may have its rights by getting the best, and the best his rights by getting the office. If any administration should think that only those of one party, or of one faction of a party—or only Catholics, Methodists, or Mormons—should be examined, a declaration of faith before competing could be made to exclude all others. The creed of churches as well as a political test of fealty were for centuries—before there was justice and virtue enough to enforce examinations of merit—the conditions of all office-holding in Great Britain and in nearly every nation of Europe. During long periods, the partaking of the communion was essential to an appointment, and in parts of Germany even to the keeping of a beer-garden or a brothel. Of whatever class examined, competition will give the government the most competent.

I cannot enter upon the practical methods of competitive examinations. They were made general, in 1870, in the home government of Great Britain as they had before been made in British India. They are easy. Largely testing character, there is no difficulty in making that test complete by the aid of a period of probation before an absolute appointment. They

have brought into the public service not only men and women of more efficiency, but those of better administrative capacity, who by promotion have filled the higher places. They in no way depend upon a tenure of good behavior, nor did they originate such a tenure. It had existed nearly a century.

On the contrary, competitive examinations are all the more needed where the term is short and the tenure precarious. If the officer is to serve a long time, though he enters ignorant, he may learn and become skilful. But if he is to go out in four years or sooner, there is the greater need of high capacity when he enters. If service were to be but for a month, to know how to do the work at beginning would be essential.

In order to give harmony to the action of examining boards and to secure a right of appeal against their injustice, a general supervising body—known in England as “The Civil Service Commission”—was essential, and was created in 1855. Its activity and growth in popularity and usefulness have steadily increased to this hour. It has corrected the abuses of local examiners and given harmony to the whole system. Its annual reports, showing the practical workings of the system, have educated the British people in those principles of justice on which their civil administration is now based. The cost of administration has been greatly diminished.

No party leader now thinks of calling the new system in question. Patronage monopoly has ceased. Members of Parliament can no longer dictate either appointments or removals. There is hardly more politics in a British post-office or custom-house than in a college. There are no political assessments. Officials are not partisan henchmen. Removals are for cause. The son of a duke equally with the son of a cartman must gain a place through the same free, open competition of merit. The appointments are made from the highest in merit thus shown. Popular education has been thus stimulated beyond all example. The government appears as the friend of education, its offices and salaries falling to those most capable—to those upon whose character the rivalry of competition can find no stain. The powerfully backed henchmen, flunkies, and parasites are generally distanced by the independent volunteers who compete. Pushing and bullying are abandoned as useless. Mr.

Bright and Mr. Gladstone have both declared that competitive examinations never should be and never can be superseded. In short, a *republican merit system* has superseded the spoils system—a spoils system far more corrupt and despotic than we ever tolerated—in that aristocrat, conservative old monarchy.

The superiority of competitive examinations attracted attention in this country at the close of the war. In 1867 Mr. Jencks presented a bill in Congress for their introduction. The whole body of the monopolists of course confederated and opposed it. The partisans all over the country and a majority in Congress, fearing the loss of patronage—as the majority in Parliament had feared and opposed twenty-five years before—raised a grand chorus of sneers, sarcasms, and shallow objections, ignorantly repeating what had long before become stale, futile, and ridiculous in Great Britain.

Though Mr. Jencks' bill was defeated, the sounder views he strengthened and the growing evils compelled the enactment of a law in 1871 which conceded to the President large authority for reform. The law, in terms, provided for neither a commission nor competitive examinations. But President Grant, regarding both as essential, approved such examinations, and created a Commission, which began its work in 1872 and which still exists.

I have no space for describing that work or the causes which suspended it in 1874, or which revived at New York City in 1879.

The facts that the Merit System thus put in force, though under great difficulties and necessarily with many limitations, was producing the same effects here that it had produced in Great Britain—undermining the old monopoly, taking from Congressmen their patronage, gaining appointments for the worthy and rejecting the mere partisan camp-followers—these were reasons enough why all the enemies of a real reform united against it. In several messages, President Grant declared his opinion that the new system had been beneficial, and advised the appropriations needed for carrying it on. But Congress, without a debate or a record of votes—members not venturing, in their places, to question the utility of the new system—in significant silence, omitted to make the least appropriation for it after 1874.

President Hayes in vain repeatedly requested Congress to make the appropriations essential.

Without the means of paying for the extra work required of the examiners, who made patriotic sacrifices, Mr. Schurz enforced competitive examinations in the Interior Department, with great benefit to the public service. And it is well known that President Hayes, efficiently seconded by Mr. James at the Post-Office and by Colonel Burt at the Naval Office and Custom-House at New York, caused such examinations to be enforced at those offices, where they have since been continued. The increased efficiency, the absence of abuses, and scandals, the doing of more business at less expense, the general satisfaction of the people, the cessation of proscriptive removals and of corruption and barter and intrigue for places, which have followed, have become a part of the general information of the country. Competent men of business experience and worthy young men from the common schools, have, in open, manly competition, won nearly all the appointments. Here is the significance of the action of the New York Chamber of Commerce, to which we have referred.

The good results at New York have been possible only because the patriotic and uncompensated members of the Examining Boards have been ably supported by other friends of reform, who have had the largest experience in enforcing reform methods. The publicity which the labors of the latter have given to the facts have made those offices schools of political education, the teaching of which have greatly strengthened the cause of reform. Such self-sacrificing labors cannot be indefinitely continued and a great nation has no right to expect them. The regular work of the Commission must be resumed, or a better organization must be provided at the public expense. Isolated Boards of Examiners cannot succeed alone. The pressure on them is too great. The government has, without cost, been shown what can be done if Congress will only do its duty—if its members will show as much patriotism as was shown by members of the British Parliament by surrendering their usurped patronage. On that all depends.

It is a serious defect of the law of 1871 that the whole responsibility was put upon the President alone ; members of Congress

not committing themselves to competitive examinations or to promotions for merit. They were left at liberty to promise places for votes, to demand them for fulfilling their pledges, and to tell the politicians and patronage-mongers that their loss of spoils was due to the *President's* rules and the *President's* competitive examinations, at which they could and did sneer when convenient. The different departments of the government—the dominant party—in the persons of its highest official representatives appeared to the monopolists and spoilsmen as divided against themselves. It was a suggestion of insincerity and weakness. The friends of reform were enfeebled in the same degree that its enemies were emboldened. Hence, the refusal of President Grant to longer carry the burthen alone, and the suspension of the rules after he had joined hands with Conkling for a third-term campaign.

The appeal had to be made from Congress to the people. They have in some measure been made to see that the stupendous patronage monopoly—of which Congress and patronage is the portion that especially enfeebles the Congressman's sense of duty—is not only their loss and a denial of their rights, but an injustice to the most worthy of their children and an affront to to the common-school system which they are taxed to support. That the appeal has not been made in vain, the accumulating petitions from eminent citizens, the growing work of thirty or more Civil Service Reform Associations at the great centres of politics, and the accordant voice of the pulpit and our higher literature, plainly enough show. The late President Garfield, more than ten years ago, commending competitive examinations to his fellow-members of Congress, declared the "result to be marked efficiency and economy. In this direction is the true line of statesmanship. If we were to look at *mere party success*, the reform of the civil service is fast becoming a demand of our time, which no party can afford to ignore." Yet he recognized the reform as above all mere party considerations.

This brings us to the Pendleton Bill.

After explanations so ample, it does not require many words. Its aim is to destroy patronage monopoly and subject the appointing power, within its range, to the principles of competition and the conditions of justice.

Conforming to the spirit and structure of our government, it has been framed in the light of our own experience and of that of Great Britain. It creates a new Commission, in close resemblance to that appointed by President Grant, but commits Congress to the principles of the Merit System. It makes superior merit tested by free open competition the condition of appointments. It condemns political assessments and official interference with elections. It requires promotions to be of the more meritorious. It does not interfere with elections or prevent any party activity which is either useful or honest. It leaves terms unchanged. On one extreme, it does not include the 3500 officials confirmed by the Senate; or, on the other (until so directed by the President), it does not extend to any office where there are not as many as fifty subordinates. It will therefore cause the prompt establishment of the Merit System with the enforcement of competitive examinations, in the seven departments at Washington, in about thirty of the larger post-offices and custom-houses, where abuses are greatest; there being about fifteen of each having fifty or more subordinates. It will therefore in the outset take about ten thousand places away from the monopolists and the spoilsmen.

Not more than this can be safely attempted at once. Ten thousand contests with patronage-mongers and partisans is enough to begin with. Every office where the Merit System is put in force must be made a school for educating the people up to a demand for the extension of the new system, which the bill authorizes the President to make. It will require the consistent and earnest support of the intelligent classes to wrest so many prizes from the spoilsmen and break down so many gates of monopoly. When these places are filled with men, the superiors of all who contested, we may be sure it will not be long before they will rise to the higher by promotion. The 3500 places now filled by outside politicians, through a competition of influence and monopolists before the Senate on confirmation, will be gradually filled by promoting worthy subordinates, whom Senators will no more care to oppose than they cared to oppose Mr. Pearson to succeed Mr. James as postmaster at New York.

The new Commission is required to make an annual report, which will place the methods and results of the new system

before the public. If it cannot win strength in the supporting opinion of an enlightened people, it will neither deserve nor secure a paramount enforcement. It will be for the Commission in supervising the various examining boards to see that the questions and the subjects upon which information is required, under the President's rules, shall be everywhere appropriate and reasonable, neither exacting too much nor too little for entering the public service. It will be an important duty of the Commission to cause justice to be done and the facts to be made clear in every case of alleged injustice on the part of examiners, or damaging misrepresentations by the enemies of reform.

It is an important part of the Pendleton Bill that it commits Congress against political assessments and in favor of competitive examination under a Commission. The moral weight of Congress would strengthen the new system. Its members could not without stultifying themselves any longer assail it, sneer at it, or press their favorites against its barriers. The President would not stand alone against an army of spoilsmen and monopolists.

Such in aim and provision—in the experience upon which it rests, in the spirit which gave it birth, in the principles which it embodies—is the Pendleton Bill. I must think that it fairly presents a great issue between the opposing elements of our politics. I am not aware that any man of candor united with administrative experience, or any man who has made a study of our methods of administration or those of the older nations, who is not a devotee of partisan methods, now questions the essential provisions of this bill. It is doubtless not free from imperfections, and it should be changed wherever it can be made better. The intelligent and honest portion of our citizens will be largely responsible for continued abuses if they do not make their influence felt at this favorable moment for legislation in aid of reform.

DORMAN B. EATON.

PHILOSOPHY AND ITS SPECIFIC PROBLEMS.

THERE lies before me a work just published in German, the object of which is, like that of Mr. Spencer's "Data of Ethics," to build up a "Rational Ethics" on the basis of the truths of biology. The belief that such a construction is not only possible, but is really possible on no other basis, implies, by a deduction the terms of which may here be omitted, a conviction that no real, exact, unadulterated knowledge exists or can exist for man except in the form of physical science, and that, accordingly, no object of knowledge is accessible to human faculties, except such as physical science can grasp.

To knowledge in its most absolute, universal, and final form for man the name philosophy is commonly given in European languages. As matter of historic fact, philosophy in its grandest and most influential forms has not been a thing identical with physical science. The belief above ascribed to the author in question is tantamount to the belief that philosophy, in the true sense of the term, and physical science are nevertheless *per se* identical. This persuasion is expressly enunciated by him in the introduction to his work. It is well known that physical science, as such, is the science of things sensibly observable. There is no physical science that does not "depend on sensible perception and observation." Our author now declares that all knowledge whatsoever is dependent upon the same characteristic conditions, and, moved by this conviction, adds: "It will be the task of a new generation to study philosophy not simply with the aid of the physical sciences, but through and in them alone—in short, to resolve philosophy into physical science."

These positions will of course strike one who is acquainted

with the history of British speculation in its most conspicuous movements as anything but novel. The rather they will seem like the reappearance of "old, familiar faces." To what thoughtful reader of English are not the outlines of the philosophy of Mr. Herbert Spencer already like a twice-told tale? And who does not know that this philosophy is but the repetition, in principle, of the wisdom of Britain's philosophic sages (with few exceptions) from the time of Francis Bacon down to this day? The dress is modern. It sparkles with ornaments drawn in profuse abundance from the curiosity-shop of modern science. But the form within is old—older than Bacon, and existing in the history of European thought as far back as the pre-Socratic philosophers and the Sophists of Greece. According to this philosophy, then, as according to our German author, philosophy, on its positive side, is identical with the largest generalizations of physical science, and, in its application to the explanation of particular facts or realms of existence, consists in the demonstration that such facts or realms at once conform to and confirm these generalizations. What is knowable is sensible phenomena, and these are, as more particularly described, phenomena of the "redistribution of matter and motion." This redistribution, again, takes place according to a law of periodic evolution and dissolution, or of cosmic ebb and flow—the process of the universe being conceived to consist in the successive recurrence at regular but protracted intervals of periods of absolute homogeneity and of extreme heterogeneity. It is particularly interesting to note that this conception, which in kind is perfectly scientific, dates, in the history of European thought, almost from the very earliest beginnings of Grecian speculation. But what it more specially concerns us here to notice is that this notion, this ostensibly all-comprehensive generalization, which may be perfectly valid, and in application has shown itself abundantly fruitful, as a law of the redistribution of (the phenomena of) matter and motion, is held by Mr. Spencer to include, and to contain for us the final explanation of, all that man knows or can know. Knowledge itself, intelligence, will, purpose, the pursuit and realization of ideals, in society, the state, art, religion, all of these are regarded as knowable only so far as they can be reduced to phenomena of the redistribution

of matter and motion, following a mechanical, automatically self-executing law of evolution. All processes whatsoever are viewed as consisting—so far as they are or can be objects of exact knowledge for us—in the resolution or composition of motion, following the line of least resistance or of greatest mechanical traction. All science is physical science. The negative side of this philosophy consists in the alleged science or knowledge—which the theoretical bases of physical science are illegitimately employed to justify—that no other science than that which is above described is possible; that, while there doubtless exists an “absolute reality” which is different from the material and kinetic phenomena known to physics or to sense, yet this is for us “wholly unknowable;” it is not a possible object of our intelligence, nor, consequently, of our intelligent concern.

Such is and such has always been in times of free intellectual life a widely prevalent notion respecting philosophy, or respecting the highest reach of human knowledge. And such for a long time to come, and perhaps always, is likely to be the case. For, as all men know and confess, our knowledge begins with physical sensation. In the order of the development of cultured or scientific intelligence it is the science of physical objects which must precede. The child must first know, distinguish, its parents as physically embodied individuals before it can know them in their true reality, i.e. in their spiritual character as moral, or immoral, personalities. The predestined philosopher, or even the potential philosopher—a description which covers all men of sound mind—must first know, or know of, the phenomenal universe, the object of physical science; and it is scarcely possible that there should not always be some persons who will be so fascinated and satisfied with the mathematical exactness and, in its kind, demonstrative certainty of sensible knowledge, that they will not leap to the conclusion that this fills the ideal and realizes all the possibilities of all knowledge. And, as man is constituted, it is well for philosophy that this should be so. It is the “spur of denial” which has goaded the human mind in every historic instance of high philosophic achievement on to the rescue of its most sacred and substantial, i.e. its ideal, possessions. The plausible and destructive tho superficial doubt of

the Sophists was followed by the energetic self-assertion of intelligence in Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. The spiritualistic negativism of Spinoza and Locke served as a counter-irritant to Leibnitz. The philosophical scepticism of Hume awoke Kant from his self-confessed "dogmatic slumber," and Kant brought forth those not less illustrious and influential "Epigonen" who, if they did not reconstruct, certainly rehabilitated, the world of mind and of man's undivided experience.

If the notion that philosophy, on the side of its positive content, is limited to the highest generalizations of the science of physical phenomena be erroneous, it is obvious that the origin of the error cannot be directly traced to physical science itself. Physical science is precisely the science of physical objects, of sensible phenomena, and of nothing else. Its legitimate and only concern is to ascertain precisely what the phenomena are, and to point out the rules of their coexistence in space and of their sequence in time. The dogma of our necessary ignorance concerning aught but sensible phenomena is not a physical object. It is not a sensible phenomenon. It is not a law of sensible phenomena. It is an ideal persuasion, which, if demonstratively established, results, not from the investigations of physical science, but from inquiries which belong to the science of knowledge, the science which determines the nature and scope of all knowledge. The identification of philosophy with physical science is therefore in no sense the work of the latter, but wholly and exclusively of self-appointed quasi-interpreters of science. One can, accordingly, not but deeply regret that from certain quarters the cry should often be heard that "science" seeks to forge weapons" against vital truths, by the power of which men live and the universe consists, and which it is the real business of philosophy to demonstrate. Science, as such, seeks to do nothing of the sort. She seeks simply to ascertain the literal facts which lie within her sphere. And the more perfectly she accomplishes this task, the better is it for philosophy and for all of those interests of life and intelligence which are in

¹ It has become common in our day to restrict the term "science," without qualifying epithet, in technical use to denote "inquiries into the constitution and modes of action of corporeal objects" (see Fowler's edition of Bacon's "*Novum Organum*," p. 98). This usage is conformed to in this part of our text.

theory peculiarly dependent on philosophy. The combined history of modern philosophy and science has illustrated this fact, and is destined to illustrate it yet more clearly. Within her sphere, as above described, physical science reigns alone and supreme. Philosophy recognizes in her a handmaid, and no one has a right to quarrel with her. The only dispute can be with those who, on other than purely physico-scientific grounds, maintain that she is sole mistress of the whole field of human intelligence.

Again, if error is contained in the thesis which identifies philosophy with physical science, this is so, and is capable of being known and demonstrated, only because the thesis contravenes experimental fact. The error is to be overthrown, therefore, not through mere emphasis of contrary assertion, nor by dialectical subtleties of verbal argument, but by experimental, objective demonstration. All our knowledge consists in nothing but the interpretation and comprehension of experience. Physical science is simply the analysis of the real or possible content of our sensible experience. If all our experience is sensible, then all our knowledge is of a corresponding order. If, on the contrary, our whole experience is not thus limited; if, in addition to its sensible side (which none deny), it has another or other sides, then the range of our real or possible knowledge will be correspondingly enlarged. Philosophy now is nothing but the examination of our whole and undivided experience with a view to ascertaining its whole nature, its range, and its content. The thesis which identifies philosophy with physical science—i.e. which denies to philosophy an object or a field of objects peculiarly its own—rests, if it have any theoretical or scientific basis whatever, on the ground of just such a—real or professed—examination. Philosophy in its grander historic forms, in those forms in which it has reached positive and commanding results that give the lie to the above-mentioned thesis, has rested on the same foundation. The poetic fancy of a Plato may have led him to set forth the truth he saw in images or under the form of “myths,” which, as history has shown, were no less calculated to conceal than to reveal the message they contained. The laborious attempts of an Aristotle or a Hegel to reach literal accuracy in the statement of demonstrable

truths may have led them often to adopt a phraseology which, at first sight, would seem to imply abstraction from experimental fact, rather than to be the direct expression of such fact. And to a mental eye clouded with sensuous prejudices and not trained—or perhaps too indolent or preoccupied—to follow the path of experimental demonstration which they pursued, even their most successful statements may seem as meaningless as the sounds of civilized speech to barbaric ears. Nor is it indeed to be maintained that the science which they and others of like mind proclaimed and still proclaim was, or is, perfect, complete, and free from relative error; but of what science can the contrary be said? But what is strenuously to be insisted on, as simple matter of historic fact, is that their whole labor was nothing but an attempt to comprehend man's whole, actual experience. It was in no sense an attempt—*per se* absurd and nonsensical—to determine, by the pursuit of a “high-priori road,” truths out of all possible relation to experience. The nearest approach in form to such an attempt is found, not in the history of philosophy proper, but of what most people nowadays understand by “metaphysics.” It is signally illustrated in the history of British “philosophy,” whether “empirical” or “intuitional.” The “empirical philosopher” first determines that all our knowledge or experience is strictly of a sensible nature. This means, being interpreted, that all that I know is rigorously confined to the consciousness of my own individual mental states or “feelings.” The immediate inference then is that I have no knowledge, properly speaking, of the “external world” which my consciousness is popularly supposed to represent, nor of myself as a knowing agent, or recipient, capable either of creating or of receiving, or “having,” the consciousness in question. I and the external world are, if we really exist at all, “*meta*-physical” entities. We are independent of and lie *behind*, or *beyond*, that which is assumed to be the only object and instrument of knowledge, viz. empirico-sensible consciousness. The “belief” in our existence is indeed inexpugnable, but it is wholly unaccountable, mysterious, “conjured up by nature.” And yet, as the “empirical philosopher” would not entertain any belief, even on compulsion, in a wholly irrational manner, moral necessity is laid upon him to seek to

construct some sort of scientific justification for the particular beliefs in question, and especially for that one which strikes our empiricist as the more important of the two, viz. the belief in the existence of an external world! And so the problem respecting the existence of the external world could become, in the language of Mr. Bain, the "great problem of metaphysics [*sic*!] in the eighteenth century," as it still is for Mr. Bain and other metaphysicians, the Mills, Spencers, and their like, of the nineteenth century. But since all ground of evidence upon which to solve the "problem" is cut away by the dogmatic theory of knowledge or experience adopted at the outset, it follows that all discussion of it, all ostensible weighing of evidence concerning it, can really only consist in a dialectical beating of the air, dancing or trying to dance in an intellectual vacuum, pompously uttering words and phrases which have a solemn sound but convey no meaning. As for the "intuitionists," the number of their original and invincible or "intuitive" beliefs is more numerous, including the belief in God, in absolute moral and æsthetic distinctions, etc., etc. But even for them too—whose mode of viewing consciousness as a source of knowledge is identical in kind with that of the "empiricists," their ostensible adversaries—the "cardinal question" (in Hamilton's words) of theoretic interest for philosophy is the question relating to our "perception of the external world." If this be "metaphysics," the self-confessed inability of the vast majority of sensible and intelligent people to "understand" it, and their indisposition to hear or know aught of it, require neither apology nor further explanation. It is the work of philosophy to offer to men the intellectual bread of life and not, like the "metaphysics" of sensational or empirical psychology, a stone. The external world, the question concerning whose existence furnishes so much employment to sensational "metaphysics," is given in man's experience. It is not indeed, as our "metaphysicians" find, given in his sensible experience, considered purely and simply as such, but it is given in his whole experience, which is not merely and exclusively sensible. It is no work of philosophy, it is not one of philosophy's "specific problems," to justify our belief in the external world, or to prove the "real existence" of the latter, but to comprehend it as it is given. The like is to be said with

reference to the other beliefs of empirical or intuitionist empiricism above noted. All of these beliefs illumine and explain each other in the whole and undivided experience of man, which, when philosophically comprehended, is seen to constitute a self-sufficient organism, not of mysterious persuasion or of doubt, but of knowledge. Arbitrarily to cut off, in theory, from experience its larger and fundamentally important half, and then to pronounce mysterious and inscrutable those convictions at once elementary and universal which still rise in man's consciousness from this half, which has only been suppressed in theory, but cannot be wholly abstracted from in reality, and then finally to make "philosophy" or "metaphysics" to consist in the attempt to furnish a quasi-theoretical, or at least a practical, justification of human conduct in still clinging to some or all of them—this is the most absolute piece of nonsense in which human intellect has ever seriously indulged. It is the worst sort of abstraction, for it mutilates man, tearing the organic whole of his living experience into miserable shreds. And it is no wonder that to the mass of mankind "the words of the metaphysicians" who are guilty of it

"Are unrefreshing as the mist and wind
That through the withered leaves of autumn whistle."

The words of the great philosophers, the real "*maestri di color, che sanno*," have been a "power to uplift" man and the world of which he is an organic member, simply because, founded on patient and reverent examination of the whole experience of man, they were in extraordinary measure a power to reveal to man both himself and his universe in their true nature, and not because they were concerned with the quibbling question as to whether man and the world really existed, as inscrutable things-in-themselves, apart from individual conscious states. And this will continue to be the secret of their influence in the future. It is this that may enable us to predict with perfect certainty that, for example, the Platonic-Aristotelian theory of ideal, spiritual reality will be hereafter, as it has been in the past, a power to mould and sustain civilization—i.e. the organized intelligence of mankind as expressing itself in religion, art, the

state, and in comprehension of nature¹—such as the “agnostic” and yet, by sleight-of-hand, “transfigured realism” of Mr. Herbert Spencer can never become.

Philosophy has an historic existence as a science. It has demonstrated many truths. That is, according to the true sense of the word *demonstration*, it has *pointed out* many characteristic truths as essentially involved in human experience. Its two greatest historic movements are represented in the classic philosophy of Greece—Socrates, Plato, Aristotle—and in modern German philosophy, from Kant to Hegel. It is not an absolutely completed science, and, like any other science, it requires to be cultivated in order not to be practically lost. One of the happiest signs of the times is the new industry with which the study of philosophic science, both in itself and in its history, is now being cultivated. The watchword in Germany is now—after an interval of comparative philosophical exhaustion, which followed soon after Hegel's death—“back to Kant!” But this really means not only “back to Kant!” but “back also to those successors of Kant who for the time completed his work!” In Great Britain during the last decade a remarkable galaxy of scholars and thinkers have come to the front, who have broken over the insular boundaries of earlier British speculation and have given to British thought a new and healthier tone. The old “metaphysics,” including that of its most recent conspicuous representative, Mr. Spencer, seems, fortunately, to be already quite obsolescent. In this country the same new life is appearing, and manifests itself in the maintenance of schools and journals of philosophy, in the extension of philosophic study at universities, and in publications and schemes of publication, looking to the diffusion of philosophic intelligence. What does all this mean? At what are they aiming—so far as they understand, or may be presumed to understand, their aims—who are engaged in promoting this movement? Their aim is, at all events, a purely scientific or objective one. It is not to prop up a preconceived system, or a tradition, or a prejudice. It is in

¹ Otto Liebmann (in “Gedanken und Thatsachen,” I. Heft, Strasburg, 1882) shows instructively how Darwinism to-day unwittingly confirms and even, in other language, reaffirms the fundamental Aristotelian conceptions concerning nature.

its substance not a new one, but as old as all comprehensive human thought. It is, of course, primarily to promote the knowledge that philosophy, as a special science, exists and has peculiar problems, and then to make clearly known what these problems are, of what solution they have been found capable, and what must yet be done in order to render the solution, in form and in detail of demonstration, still more perfect.

Philosophy is, (1) in form, knowledge of the universal. (2) In substance it is knowledge of the universal or absolute nature of experimental reality. In this regard no more perfect definition can be given of philosophy than that furnished by Aristotle, who terms it the *science of being as such*. The establishment of such a science is the cardinal problem of philosophy. (3) The key or way to the solution of the problem is found in the science of knowledge. Reality, Being, is an object of knowledge. It exists for us, it can be conceived by us, in no other fashion. The science of knowing is but the obverse of the science of being. The two sciences are inseparable. This is concretely illustrated in all "systems" of philosophy, as also, in its measure, in the larger generalizations of physical science itself. The science of being and the science of knowing, or the former science through the latter—these phrases express in the most general manner the leading specific problems of philosophy. (4) There exist, further, for philosophy as many minor problems as there are different departments or aspects of the whole field of experimental reality. While one nature permeates, constitutes, or underlies all of these departments—for Being is one—yet they are separated by characteristic differences, and their names are such as the following: Nature, Mind, History, Society, The State, Art, Religion. And in all of these philosophy must search for and find the illustration and confirmation of its universal principle, while also, on the other hand, it must with the light of this principle be able to throw light upon, or explain and render comprehensible, all of them.

The four points now enumerated are all illustrated, *pro forma*, in the "philosophy" of those who yield to the demand mentioned at the beginning of this article, and seek to make physical science the ultimate in knowledge. This is the same as to say that they are all illustrated in their way in the funda-

mental features and larger generalizations of physical science itself.

(1) For physical science, as for all science, it is not information, however abundant, respecting particular facts, which constitutes scientific knowledge as such. To be aware that apples fall to the ground and the planets move in certain apparent directions is not of itself enough to constitute scientific knowledge of these phenomena. These facts may be noticed by an idiot. They are not scientifically known until they are explained, and explanation results simply from the discovery of something common to the two cases and to all similar cases—something “universal” about them—viz. the common rule of their motion, or the so-called law of gravitation. When, therefore, we say that philosophy has the form of knowledge of the universal, we simply say that it has the form of science.

(2) As regards its substance, physical science is “knowledge of the universal or absolute nature of experimental reality” *within the peculiar sphere to which such science is confined*. This sphere is the sphere of sensible existence, *qua* sensible. In its largest generalizations physical science is therefore the “science of (sensible) being as such.” The results of these generalizations, which are well known, are indeed highly abstract and come far short of that which all men, including the scientific generalizers themselves, by an inexpugnable conviction believe to be given in their whole and immediate experience. These results, summarily expressed, are that sensible existence, *qua* sensible, is not substantial, but phenomenal. It is not, for example, matter as a substantive or independent and absolute existence which is sensibly known to us, but only “figured space.” Nor have we sensible knowledge of powers or forces, but only of motions. The world of physical science, as such, is therefore described by the scientist as simply a world of “configuration and motion.” It is a world of sensible phenomena spatially separate or “coexistent” and temporally sequent. These phenomena constitute to sense an aggregate and not an organic whole. No one phenomenon by its *nature* implies another. The relations among them, the rules or “laws” of coexistence and sequence, are hence purely mechanical and capable of exact expression in the form, and only in the form, of mathematical formulæ. Thus physical science is, *within*

her sphere, a science of being as such, or of the universal and absolute nature of experimental (in this case, *sensible*) reality; and philosophy in proclaiming her intention to create a similar science within a larger sphere does no more, provided the larger sphere exist, than to proclaim the scientific nature of her intention.

(3) But by what process does physical science reach the above results, so contrary to first impression and to practical belief? By reflecting on the meaning of the word *sensible*, by which she describes all the objects of her contemplation. The term *sensible* denotes not so much a quality of objects as of knowledge. A "sensible object" is an object *known through the senses*. An object becomes sensibly known to us, or it becomes for us a *sensible* object, not by virtue of itself alone, but by virtue of the way in which we know it. It is therefore through the science of sensible knowledge that the science of sensible objects, *qua* sensible, or the above-described physico-scientific conclusions respecting the nature of sensible being, as such, are reached. The study of the nature, or of the ontological quality or significance, of sensible knowledge is necessarily prosecuted through study of the nature of sensible consciousness. This study we find prosecuted in the monumental works of British psychology from Locke's time till to-day. It is found, as a first apparent result of such inquiry, that for sensible consciousness a couple of factors are necessary; namely, an object to be known and a subject fitted to know or to receive knowledge. The object may be of any nature whatever. It need be in no sense related in nature to the subject. Indeed, so related it cannot be, for the subject, as a subject of *sensible consciousness*, is found to have no nature whatever, but the rather to resemble a waxed tablet, or a piece of white paper, on which nothing has been written. The relation between subject and object is here purely mechanical or accidental, like that between a cat and the pile of stones on which a frightened leap may fortuitously land her. The object is held to be able in no way to enter itself into or become *per se* identified with the consciousness of the subject. This consciousness therefore can only be produced by superficial contact, impact, or impression, proceeding from the object to the sub-subject. The latter is passive, and is "affected" by objects.

"States" are induced in the subject, and these, but not the assumed objects themselves, are the immediate and only object of its sensible knowledge. These states, then, are naturally termed, in distinction from the unknown objects, *phenomena*; they are rather appearances of things than things themselves. Thus it is through the science of sensible knowledge or "experience," *qua* sensible, that physical science arrives at knowledge of the phenomenal nature of sensible existence, *qua* sensible. It is in like manner through the science of knowledge or experience without qualification, or of knowledge not simply in its specifically sensible aspect, but also in its other aspects, that philosophy reaches scientific and strictly experimental conclusions respecting the nature of existence without qualification, or of existence in its other than merely sensible aspects.

(4) The specific problems of physical science are as numerous as the various departments, whether natural or of artificial origin, in sensible experience. Acoustic, optics, pure mechanics, etc., etc., so far as they merely involve phenomena of "configuration and motion," furnish problems for a like number of special physical sciences. The same is true of mental and spiritual processes, considered on the side of their physiological conditions or correspondences. Here physical science has something that it alone can ascertain, determine, or "explain." In like manner, provided the science of knowledge discloses a realm of human experience which transcends phenomena of configuration and motion, philosophy will have—in addition to its fundamental problems, which are concerned with the establishment of the science of knowledge and, through it, of being—as many further special problems as there are different departments or spheres within this realm. As matter of fact, the existence of such a superphysical, and yet strictly experimental, realm of experience is demonstrated in the philosophical science of knowledge, in agreement with the witness of history and of ever-present, living consciousness. And so it happens, as from the nature of the case it cannot but happen, that when the data and method of physical science are treated as those of all knowledge, and when, therefore, they are employed to explain other fields or aspects of experience than those which are resolvable into the mechanism of moving lines or points in space ("redis-

tribution of matter and motion"), the result is not positive explanation, real comprehension of the experimentally given, the illumination of experience with the light of genuine objective intelligence, but something very different. The things to be explained, the facts to be comprehended, are either explained away—*i.e.*, in substance denied, or resolved into subjective and illusory "prejudices"—or are summarily declared absolutely incomprehensible, or "unknowable," and so removed out of all practical relation to human experience. The picture of existence which physical science draws is monochromatic. Its painting is all "gray on gray."

"Gray, my dear friend, is all our theory,
And green the golden tree of life."

That is, being interpreted, all our physico-scientific theory is "gray," and comes far short of reproducing the fulness of living, experimental reality. Its last results are abstract and not concrete; they are spectral, "phenomenal," anatomical, dead, and not bright, fresh, and inspired with the glow of man's unmutilated experience. It is true science, most important and most indispensable within its sphere. But it is not all science. It is the interpretation of one aspect of experience, but not of all aspects. It is therefore not philosophy, in which man justly requires that he shall find himself and his universe, on all their sides, not explained away or resolved into illusion, but comprehended.

From what has gone before it must now be sufficiently plain that the first thing which philosophy must do—the first thing which philosophy had to do—in order to vindicate the foregoing assertions and prove its right to resist absorption into physical science is, and was, to labor for the establishment of a complete science of knowledge or—which amounts to the same thing—of *conscious experience*. For the creation of this science much more was accomplished than is generally supposed in the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. But the most extensive labors in this direction have been accomplished in modern times. More especially the whole strength of the brilliant philosophical movement represented in modern history by the names of

Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel lay in that which was therein demonstratively accomplished toward the comprehension of knowledge, or of the nature, the process, and the objective content of man's immediate intelligent experience. And the history and results of this movement are particularly full of instruction for those of us who have been reared in the atmosphere of British physico-scientific or sensational "empiricism." Kant, the leader in it, was at one time under the well-nigh complete influence of British empiricism, especially as represented by Hume and the older British moralists. Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason" is simply a re-examination of the traditional British theory of sensible consciousness, with the result of showing that all consciousness is not merely sensible, but also intelligible. Man's conscious experience, Kant showed, is not merely passive sense, but also involves active intelligence. But Kant only went half way in his exploration of conscious experience. Under the influence of early prejudice he was led to treat intelligence only as a logical or formal aspect of sense, which latter was held to be the dominant factor in consciousness and alone the determining factor of real knowledge. His successors demonstrated, not by far-fetched, roundabout ways of indirect "proof" or of merely plausible but fanciful hypothesis, but by a more complete and unprejudiced scientific examination of the facts of the case itself, that sense is the rather only an aspect of intelligence; that intelligence, further, is not merely subjective, a purely formal mechanism of the intellect, but is also objective, and stretches out spiritual arms to embrace, not the dark phantom of the "unknowable" or of the inaccessible, because non-sensible, *Ding-an-sich*, but an intelligible, rational, self-illuminating, and self-explaining world of living, present, and effective reality. And so (to express this substantially in the language of Prof. Otto Pfleiderer, "Religions-Philosophie," Berlin, 1878, p. vi.) it is to be considered as "the immortal merit of the speculation of Schelling and Hegel that it made its way out of the barren heath" of sensational metaphysics—which was "so taken up with reflection concerning the possibility and limits of knowledge" that it had no time for or could not find its way to, knowledge itself—"to the green

pasture of objective reality, and, rescuing us from empty formulæ, brought us to the rich and concrete knowledge of ourselves and of the world."

Now no science can afford to swear blindly by any name, nor to regard itself as bound up and irrevocably fixed, beyond possibility of improvement or extension, in any "system" or set of historic books. To do this were no less senseless in philosophy than in mathematics or any other human science. But it were no less senseless for philosophy than for any other science to ignore its great historic names and not to recognize and profit by the positive scientific achievement of the past. *Philosophic knowledge, in kind, if not in absolute perfection, has an historic existence*, and it exists with form and substance other than, tho in no sense contradictory—the rather complementary—to physical science. Moreover, its grander outlines have been determined, and that, too, on the basis of rigorously experimental demonstration. And the only way in which an unphilosophical age, turning anew to philosophy, can find its bearings in the field of this science is resolutely to learn and understand what the masters in such knowledge have known and declared. And so the unusually extensive study of the history of philosophy which is going on in our day is one of the most auspicious signs for the future of philosophy.

The limits of this article will permit only a few final indications respecting the more concrete methods and results and the special problems of philosophy as revealed in the history of philosophy (especially in Greek and German philosophy), and evident, in our opinion, upon any independent, impartial, and complete examination of the nature of the case itself.

1. *Science of Knowledge*.—Knowledge does indeed, as above indicated, involve the real distinction of object and subject. And according to *first*, or *sensible*, appearance the distinction is simply mechanical. Subject and object thus appear as merely and absolutely different, separate from each other, and unrelated in nature. And knowledge appears as the result of contact or impact. This is the true account of sensible knowledge, *qua* sensible, or of knowledge naïvely considered only in its first, or specifically sensible, aspect. But it is not the complete, nor the true, account of knowledge, considered as knowledge. As a proof of

this, we have but to remember that the sensational theory of knowledge, taken by itself, ends not in knowledge or an intelligible account of knowledge, but in the confession of mystery or the dogmatic assertion of necessary ignorance. Subject and object, which were assumed as the mechanical factors of knowledge, turn out to be something of which we know, and by the terms of the theory can know, nothing—the justification of our “belief” in which is a *meta*-physical, *meta*-sensible, and hence finally insoluble problem! Not the factors of knowledge or consciousness are known, but only their contact, and how or why this contact should assume the form of consciousness, and how this consciousness should be known to itself, or to us (provided we really exist!) is “inscrutable.” Now, to clear up this confusion of outer darkness, we have not to theorize “in’s Blaue hinein,” nor to go in any way outside of the facts of the case, but simply to examine more narrowly and to admit and comprehend all the facts themselves. The distinction of subject and object is experimentally real; and it is within, not behind, the veil of consciousness. Subject and object really confront each other and meet together. They must be, and are in fact, different, and they must be, and are in fact in some sense identical, in order that knowledge may exist. The object in order to be an object at all—even a *conceivable* one—must be *my* object, *my* *conscious* object. It must through my consciousness become identified with me, otherwise I cannot be conscious of it. For I can be conscious only of myself, and consequently of objects only as they are a part of myself. On the other hand, what am I, as so-called conscious subject, without an object? In order to be subject, I must have an object. The process by which I take the object up into myself, or into my consciousness, may otherwise be described as the process by which I invest the object with myself, or project myself upon the object. It is only on condition that I thus project myself that I become known to myself. The subject of consciousness must merge, nay, “lose” itself in the object, before it can “find” itself. Now, all these are hard sayings, notwithstanding their agreement with the literal, obvious, and experimental facts of the case, so long as we understand the words employed in their mechanical or sensible signification. For is it not the fact, does not even sensa-

tional psychology find it to be true, that the *real* object and subject of *knowledge*—independently of the fancied subject and object of our *ignorance*—are somehow identical in consciousness? Obviously we are required by experimental fact to give to our words another than merely mechanical or sensible meaning. If, as is immediately obvious, object and subject must be both different and identical, this cannot possibly be so in a mechanical sense. It cannot be so, if subject and object are so many merely different space-occupying entities or “phenomena.” Such entities, thus considered, can only be different, not identical. Such entities, in mechanical, superficial relation to each other, subject and object may indeed, in one aspect, be. But this is not enough. They must be, and they reveal themselves as, something more. The relation between them is organic, and this implies—in agreement with demonstrable fact of living experience—that they, the terms of the relation, have an ideal, spiritual, or “universal” nature. An organic relation is the relation of the one effectively present in the many. Such a relation can only be ideal. But it is not for this reason any the less real. The rather, it is the essence and foundation of all conscious, experimental reality. It is an *active*, concrete relation, not abstract, mechanical, and dead. In it is contained the open secret of life. In a living organism, the idea of the whole includes by necessary implication all of the parts, and, *vice versa*, each of the parts implies and reveals the idea of the whole. In the bone of an extinct animal the naturalist will read the structure of the whole animal. The bone is and is not a whole by itself. It is mechanically separable from the rest of the structure, and seems to form by itself, when sensibly considered, a complete object by itself. But ideally and truly considered it is, in its separate existence, no more than a clump of earth. The rather it truly appears not as a whole, but as part of a whole. It needs an “other” to its own completeness. In it, the other, and the whole which both constitute, are to the mind’s eye visibly legible. Now suppose the bone restored to its original place in the whole and living organism, and then endowed with the capacity of consciousness. The range of its consciousness we will suppose bounded by the superficial limits of the whole organism. The bone will be the immediate, empirical subject of consciousness, and the rest of the organism will

be the direct or empirical object. Can we, now, suppose the subject to have true and complete consciousness of itself, unless this consciousness include the consciousness not simply of itself as an individual bone, but of the whole organic structure which is implied and revealed in itself? Can the "subject" bone have real consciousness of itself, unless it see itself, not merely (to suppose the impossible) in itself, *qua* individual, but in its other, its so-called object, which, while numerically other than, is yet ideally and organically one with, or is the real completion of, the true self of the individual bone? Is self-consciousness possible for it on any other condition, than that it lose and so find itself in and through its objective consciousness—its consciousness of the "object?" And, on the other hand, can it have consciousness of the object, except through consciousness of itself, not simply as individual, but also as universal, or participant in that universal (the one ideal whole, the living organism) which includes both subject and object? In short, we must see that the true, or potential, or universal "self" of the bone includes both the subject and the object of its putative consciousness, and that while subject and object are mechanically different, yet they are organically, ideally one. So is it with all our conscious knowledge and experience. The "identity" of subject and object is organic identity or oneness of nature. Subject and object are parts of a whole, and each part at once implies and reveals the other. Or, more exactly expressed, individual subject and individual object are so many particulars, which are included under and illumined by the pervasive and effective and, for this very reason, ideal and spiritual light of one concrete, organic universal, in whose nature all participate and by whose living power all are sustained. The subject can be conscious of its different object, because the object is a part of its true and whole or universal self. The subject in knowledge, the true, whole, and undivided self, must be, and is revealed as, ideally or potentially coextensive with the really "objective" universe. This was perceived by Aristotle, who declared that "the soul," in order to know aught, "must in some sense be identical with all things." It is the lesson of this truth that philosophy reads in Kant's "discovery" of the subjectivity of time and space, the forms of our sensible consciousness. Philosophy has, indeed, to

deny Kant's allegation that space and time are exclusively subjective. But to know that they are at once and equally objective and subjective is, *pro tanto*, to know that subject and object are not separated by a mechanical chasm, but joined by continuity, community, or universality of ideal nature. In Kant's doctrine of the "categories" of "pure physical science" is contained by like implication the same lesson, which in the works of his successors we may read, set forth in greatest amplitude of illustration and experimental demonstration.

The immediate lesson of the science of knowledge is that all true consciousness is self-consciousness, all knowledge self-knowledge, all experience self-experience. But then, in order to recognize the substantive, objective truth of this, we have to revise and enlarge the individualistic conception of "self" which is posited by the sensational theory of knowledge. We must revise and enlarge it, so that it may agree with the full content of actual experience. We must regard self as not only individual, but also universal or participating in—organically one with—the universal. In its latter aspect it includes the "object" of consciousness—not excludes it. In this way the real unity and the real difference of subject and object are reconciled, and really objective knowledge is made possible.

2. *Science of Being*.—If the foregoing meagre outline be true to fact—and it certainly agrees in spirit with the historic results of inquiry—it is obvious that important ontological conclusions are involved in it. These conclusions are drawn with substantial unanimity—the difference is only one of relatively unimportant detail—in all those grander movements of philosophical inquiry which have reached and expressed really positive results, and have not, on the basis of a partial, dogmatically limited theory of knowledge, ended in mere negations of scepticism or agnosticism, or (as in the case of Spinoza) simply hypostatized mechanical abstractions.

Knowing and Being are one. That is to say, they are organically inseparable and identical. One cannot be rightly known without knowing the other. We frame our conceptions of being according to our conceptions of knowledge. "Being" is simply the "object" of knowledge. The conception of absolute being as an inaccessible, unknowable, tho vaguely imaginable ob-

ject of knowledge is simply an artificial creation of an incomplete, viz. the sensational, theory of knowledge. It results only from the discovery that the absolute object cannot be in merely mechanical relation to the subject,—or that it cannot be *merely* "sensible,"—accompanied by a refusal to go further in the examination of conscious experience and discover that the object in question really stands in another, an organic and perfectly intelligible, relation to the subject, and is more than sensible.

Being is the object of knowledge. But, by the terms of the science of knowledge, as is the object so, in *essential kind*, is the subject, and *vice versa*. And the nature of both is revealed in the relation subsisting between them in the act of knowledge, or in the essential relations of human experience.

First, the science of knowledge rigorously estops us from adopting any materialistic conception of absolute being. If being, as such, were materialistic, it is the senses, surely, which must inform us thereof. But, as we have seen, the knights of sensible knowledge tell us that we have no sensible knowledge of absolute material substance, but only—precisely!—of sensible, conscious phenomena. Besides, if matter possess absolute substantive reality, it must exist in atomic fashion. But the contradictions which the logical intellect discovers in the conception of a material atom are both too well known to need repetition here, and are also so glaring that the physicist himself (independently of the just-cited psychological evidence of the unknowableness of a thing called matter *per se*) is deterred by them from employing the terms of the atomic theory in any other than a symbolical sense. Again, we have seen that knowledge implies identity of nature between subject and object. If the latter be material, the former must be the same. That is to say—looking aside from other difficulties—the relation between the two must be mechanical, and then, as we have seen above, in spite of their identity in definition, neither of them can enter into that relation of organic union which is realized in actual consciousness. Still again, knowledge is a self-conscious process, partly self-determined and partly determined *ab extra*. Whatever enters into this process, and so becomes known, must exert an activity, must possess a force. But matter, even if it

could be conceived as possessing any other than sensible or phenomenal reality, could exert no force. The forces possessed by a material or sensible reality must themselves be sensible. But to sense, and consequently to pure physical science (as we have seen above), no forces are known or knowable, but only motions, or signs of motions. That is, a *sensible force* is a contradiction in terms. Accordingly, as matter of historic fact, philosophic materialism has no scientific standing in the history of speculation. Its basis has always been recognized as purely dogmatic. But this is not to say that within the sphere of physical analysis and description the materialistic conception has not its full symbolic significance and justification.

The subject of consciousness, entering into and actively maintaining relations which are so different from mechanical or sensible relations, is called a spirit. It knows itself as a force whose activity is its life, and whose life is "energy of intelligence." Its object, by the terms of the science of knowledge, must be, and is, in varying potencies and in diverse forms of manifestation, of like kind. The world is indeed a manifestation of "force" (as we are told), and force is indeed "inscrutable" to sense. But to intelligence, to the living experience of man, force is the consciously self-revealing reality of spirit. If, as Plato finds at one stage of his inquiries, "being is simply power;" if, consequently, there is no *being* where there is no *doing*, so that the sphere of the former is precisely coextensive with the sphere of the latter, then we are entitled to say that there is neither being, nor power, nor doing, where there is no present reality of spirit. But there is no such reality where there is no life. The universe of reality, therefore, whether subjective or objective, is for philosophy a universe of spiritual life. This is the reality, of which the "phenomena" of physical science, viz. configuration and motion, are in sensible consciousness the manifestation. It is the same reality which, through or in alliance with the mechanism of sensible phenomena, is more clearly manifested according to its true nature, as energy of spirit in the life of nature, and of man in society, art, and religion.

The "ideal" relation which the science of knowledge found existing between subject and object was, and is, not abstract,

but living and efficient. It was a sign of the only sort of efficiency which is known or conceivable in human experience. Being ideal and organic, its law is a law of purpose, of being which reveals itself in consentient harmonies of realized intelligence, of goodness, and love. The "Absolute," then, is, to speak with Plato, the Good; or with Aristotle, *Noûs*; or with Christianity, Love; or with Hegel, Spirit. All of these definitions agree. In and through the Absolute thus described all things are and consist.

The unity of principle which philosophy thus reaches, being organic, is concrete, not inimical to or exclusive of diversity. The only "monism" consistent with the varied universe of our actual and whole experience is spiritualistic monism.

3. *Nature, Society, Art, Religion.*—Philosophy has not to anticipate nor to meddle with the results of purely physical inquiry. The results of philosophic investigation are supplementary to the discoveries of the physical and descriptive sciences, not a substitute for them.

But when these sciences have accomplished their utmost there still remain problems respecting Nature which they cannot solve. These problems it is the business of philosophy to solve, and a test of the correctness of a philosophic principle is its adequacy to their solution. Apart from the general question respecting the ontological significance of sensible phenomena universally, they are all involved in the questions respecting the origin and meaning of law, apparent purpose, and life in nature. And philosophy, with its organic spiritualistic principle, founded on the most rigorous and exact interpretation of man's whole *experience*, is able to meet them. We can touch only upon the problem concerning life. The mechanical evolutionist seeks to show that the phenomena of life consist only in a peculiar system of motions, which as such are convertible with other forms of motion, and as matter of fact come into existence by conversion from such other forms. And yet when this demonstration is complete the consciousness still remains that the explanation of life which has been reached is only modal, not causal—phenomenal, not ontological. Hence the circumstance that a distinguished living biologist is led—in striking agreement with Aristotle's assertion that "there is something psychical in

all things"—to assume a "soul" even for the uncompounded atom, and so to make the more characteristic and explicit forms of life in organic structures to be, not an evolutionary creation of something absolutely new, but an expansion or enlargement, under more favorable conditions, of that which is present in kind in the lowest grades of existence. And so life is "soul," or "psychic force." For philosophy it is a familiar truth that the terms soul, force, energy of spirit, and life are generically equivalent. These denote the sub-phenomenal or real in existence. *ἡ γὰρ τοῦ ἐνέργεια ζωή.* This definition of Aristotle is the voice of all truly experimental philosophy. "Life is energy of mind," and life in various potencies, from the slumbering "atom-soul" to the absolutely wakeful intelligence and love of the Divine Spirit, in and through whose power all things consist, is as universal as existence.

Finally, philosophy, with its organic-spiritual conception of the universe, can understand and be just to the characteristic qualities of human experience in society, art, and religion. It is not compelled, like physico-scientific agnosticism, with its purely mechanical categories, to "explain" them by explaining them away or declaring them illusory. Morality, in the form of perfected humanity, or the individual man true to his whole self, society, in family and state, art, and religion, are forms or products of life in its highest potencies. In all of them man is inspired. In other words, he shares in, receives, and is upborne by a life broader than his own individual life. The larger life is made one with the smaller, and *vice versa*. The relation is analagous to that above depicted as existing between object and subject in consciousness. In the state (as in other forms of true society) the individual becomes part of a moral organism, capable of pursuing and realizing the largest purposes. The circle of his own life is thus enlarged, and the feeling of patriotism is his emotional response to the pulsations in him' of this wider, ideal public life. In art the artist is, as he often expresses it, seized upon, as from on high, by an ideal—cosmic or divine—power, which identifies him as its willing instrument with itself, and expresses itself through his agency in forms of all-persuasive and all-suggestive meaning and force. In religion

man "makes God his strength." He becomes a sharer in the divine life.

But all this description is fanciful, and the well-known apparent facts which substantiate it are illusory, if all relations of existence are mechanical. The relations here described can only be conceived as organic, hence as spiritual. Philosophy, in creating and upholding the science of spiritual reality, creates and maintains the true science not only of Nature, on the side of her purposeful, living reality, but also of man, in society, art, and religion. These three interests—these three orders or classes of facts, and any others that may resemble them—must find in philosophy, as we have been contemplating it and as history more or less perfectly exhibits it, their justification before the forum of intelligence. They must find it here or nowhere. And here indeed they do find it.

GEORGE S. MORRIS.

EVOLUTION IN EDUCATION.

THE writer of this article has occasionally been characterized as one of the few remaining naturalists who do not believe in the theory of evolution. Scientific questions are not necessarily decided, like political elections, by a majority of votes. Still it is uncomfortable to be in a minority, and especially in a minority supposed to be decaying and about to disappear. It may be well, therefore, to explain that those who believe in every kind of evolution and its application to everything are perhaps not the majority after all. On the other hand, it is possible that in the narrower and better-defined sense of the term every one believes in evolution of some sort. Thus it may happen that either side may claim a majority according to the way in which the question is put.

It is easy to believe in "push and pull" when there is a power to push and pull and something to be pulled and pushed, but not otherwise. It is easy to believe in "selection" when there is a determining will to select, and diverse things existing from which selection is to be made, but not easy when these conditions are wanting. It is easy to believe in evolution when there is something rolled up that is to be unrolled, otherwise evolution becomes merely a word, not a power or even a possibility. We see in a bud a number of miniature leaves or floral parts neatly rolled up together, and we can believe in the evolution of such a bud. We see in a seed the rudiments of root, stem, and leaves, and we can believe in the evolution of the seed. Even in a microscopic spore we perceive an individual cell which is capable of evolution by cell-multiplication, and thereby capable of the production of a plant. But all this has no bearing on the question whether the bud, after being un-

rolled, can change into the form of some other plant, or whether the seed in its evolution can produce a plant different from that which produced it, or whether a pellet of albumen or a grain of starch can be evolved like a bud or a seed. To ask any one to believe these propositions because he believes in the evolution of a seed or a bud is quite unwarranted. There is thus a reasonable and an unreasonable evolution, and when we are asked to accept any doctrine under this name, the first question to be asked is, What is there present to be unrolled or evolved? The next questions are, By what power can the evolution be produced, and what is its course or method?

Now in the matter of education evolution has a proper place and function. And this is no doubt one reason why evolutionists, usually so called, write much more rationally on education than they do on most other subjects. A child is the germ or bud of a man or woman. It will, if left to itself, be evolved into manhood or womanhood by its own spontaneous vitality. If we wish to guide or modify this process, we must know and follow its natural laws. This is common-sense; and when Herbert Spencer, in his little treatise on education, regards this as an evolution, he is quite right, and any one may go with him cordially as far as his agnosticism permits him to proceed, and most sensible people will be disposed to go a little farther.

Viewed in this way as an evolution, true education presents certain requirements obvious to common-sense, but much neglected hitherto by educators. Education should begin with simple ideas and proceed to those which are complex. The child proceeds thus in its own efforts at study, and in beginning any new subject, even in more advanced life, this is a good rule. We should avoid beginning with "first principles," which are not beginnings at all, but results arrived at from collection and comparison of facts. We must have the facts first and then go on to the conclusions. We must be empirical first, afterward rational; gaining the materials of knowledge before arranging them in scientific formulæ. In all this the learner must be active, not passive; he must have interest in the subject, pleasure in adding to his stores of knowledge, satisfaction in working them into scientific form and practical use. If "cram" can be

defined to be "partaking of food without previous appetite or subsequent digestion," true education must be the reverse of this. Above all the educator must bear in mind that the pupil is alive and growing. The teacher is not an artist hewing marble or wood into a statue; he is a cultivator training a growing plant. If this fact of constant, continuous growth is neglected there can be no true education; or, in other words, the growth itself will be the education, and the work of the so-called educator will be a mere patching of extraneous matter upon it, like tying artificial flowers or leaves on a living plant. There may be something even worse than this; for if the work of education runs counter to the natural growth of the pupil's mind, the result may be like that of laying a board or a tile over a tender plant, a struggle against the interference, which ends in a growth blanched, deformed, and stunted, and perhaps neither beautiful nor useful.

Taking it for granted, then, that the mind of the pupil is in process of evolution while the work of education is going on, and that education should be suited to this condition of the pupil's mind, we have a basis for the discussion of some educational principles; and I desire in this paper to consider these from the standpoint of a learner and teacher of natural science who has been working in one capacity or the other for well-nigh half a century. As such a Nestor the writer may be permitted to prattle on this subject, perhaps without much connection, and to express somewhat strongly his conclusions as to the best methods of education, more especially in science, and as to the light cast on these by the experience and discoveries of the last twenty years.

In the wider sense of the term science, it really includes all that intellectual education can effect. Knowledge logically arranged and traced to the inductive and deductive conclusions to which it leads is science in this wide sense. Scientific habits of thought cover all that is necessary for the practical working of mind. Applied science includes whatever men can do by turning to account the mastery which mind acquires over matter. Even the teaching of languages should not be divorced from science, for there is a true science of language, aiding the pupil in its acquisition and use, and cultivating his mind in the

process. The question here is not as to teaching children or young people botany, chemistry, or physics, but as to accustoming the mind, by the study of some subject or subjects in a scientific manner, to the orderly pursuit and use of knowledge, and the orderly exercise of mental power.

Whence then comes the conflict, in our educational courses, of older with newer studies, and especially of ancient languages with modern science? One cause is a mere question of time. Before the great extension of modern science, the literary element of culture, with some abstract mathematics and philosophy, engrossed the whole course of study; and these things, taught in large quantity and by crude and unscientific methods, occupied the whole time of the student. But modern science strides into the field and imperiously demands room. The time of the student cannot well be extended. His mind must not be overtasked. So there comes a conflict, and each department of study struggles for the possession of the unfortunate learner, or he has to be content with a smattering of all, odious and of little use; or, under a paltry compromise, he is permitted to substitute one for another by a system of options and exemptions.

If it were desirable that the old learning and the new should fight out their battle to the uttermost, it would be difficult to decide between them. The old culture has much in its favor. It is refined, thoughtful, literate, bookish, leading to what is termed scholarship, and to much that is pure and beautiful in taste and expression, as well as to that power which comes of well-ordered thought and language. Such polish and mental grace as result from it are certainly much to be desired. But it is eminently unpractical; and but for the traditional custom which places it at the door of entrance into learned professions, or for its leading to teaching positions in which the old grind is to be gone over with a new generation, it would be of little service in the struggle for existence beyond the habits of study and application which it may foster. The new science, on the contrary, is full of the spirit of the time. It is fresh and vigorous and full of practical applications. It trains the mind for the actual work of life, and furnishes it with the knowledge likely to be needed in every-day affairs. On the other hand, its

methods are yet somewhat crude. It wants the finish and polish of age, and has little of the refined culture of the literary course. It often exaggerates these defects by a defiant sceptical turn, which gives it a hard and unfeeling aspect, and places it in conflict with the higher sentiments of humanity. But this last evil has no essential connection with it.

The statement of the case shows what is wanted. Let young men study either languages and literature or physical sciences, or parts of both, but let the whole be thrown into the educational crucible and fused together. Let the languages and literature be imbued with the scientific spirit. Let the science be refined by higher literary and æsthetic culture. Let both be treated as preparations for practical life, in imparting useful knowledge as well as gymnastic training, so as to nourish the mental fibre and give it power and flexibility.

The practical difficulty in this, at present, is that we cannot find enough of teachers of the right kind. Few teachers of language and literature have been trained in scientific habits of thought, or even in the science of their own subjects. Science teachers are often mere specialists with limited culture and limited range of thought. It is usually only by combining these men in large institutions, and under skilful organization, that even moderately good results can be secured.

The reform of language-teaching I shall not venture to discuss any further than to say that such teaching should be carried on in a natural and scientific manner. The science of language would appear to be still in its infancy, tho men have been speaking and writing for thousands of years. Languages are ordinarily taught with far too little reference to their evolution from root-words or to their philological relations; by means of alphabets very imperfectly adapted to express their sounds, and grammars often of the most arbitrary and impractical kind; while young people are crammed with literature at a stage of development when it is as well suited to their minds as salt junk would be to the digestion of an infant a week old.

Adam, we are told, began his studies of language by naming the animals, and this no doubt in the most natural way, by imitating the sounds which they uttered. Behind this story lies the principle that some knowledge of things and their proper-

ties must precede all useful expression—a principle which carries with it a wealth of practical suggestion respecting the earlier and the higher teaching of languages, and of literature also; for any literature, ancient or modern, can be taught effectually only in connection with the facts, conditions, and circumstances to which it relates.

Nor must we be ashamed of the Adamic mode of learning by onomatopœia. Nature furnishes only the few original roots of our stock of words, but it is the glory and distinction of man that he can not only, like the mocking-bird, appropriate to himself the language of other animals, but that by his powers of articulation he can mould it into grammatical inflections, and that by his reason he can render it the vehicle of the expression of abstract ideas. But this Adamic lesson carries with it the inference that radically and originally all human languages must be the same or nearly so, not only in principle of construction, but to a large degree also in sounds, and that this radical unity must be the real basis of philology, when it shall grow to be an exact science, and when it shall be so taught in colleges and schools. The Adamic philology seems so far to have been left in the hands of very extreme evolutionists, like Vogt and others of similar style, and hence gets a bad name with respectable educators. It has often been dismissed by philologists with stale jokes about the “pooh-pooh” and “bow-wow” theories; the jesters not remembering that probably their own first essays in language consisted of some natural interjections and the imitation of the bark of the family dog. To some of these gentlemen this may appear to be very wild and irreverent talk, but they must bear in mind that I am only a naturalist, not a philologist.

In like manner scientific thinkers fail to perceive the propriety of adhering to an old and worn-out alphabet, patched up to suit one language after another till it has lost nearly all semblance of representing sounds, and creates a mystery of spelling that repels and disgusts every learner, and wastes years of precious time, to the practical exclusion of millions from any benefit of learning at all. Nor is it easy to see the use of barring the access to knowledge with arbitrary and illogical grammatical analysis, with artificial rules cumbered with hosts of

exceptions, or with linguistic and literary subtleties, all of which may be fit subjects for the exercise of leisurely men of learning, but are in no way valuable as training in right thinking, speaking, and writing.

Here we may return for a little to the great and pregnant truth already stated that the pupil is a living, growing being, not a quantity of bricks and mortar. Education has to deal with a perpetually changing organism, physical and psychical. If left entirely to itself, this would continue to grow or develop in some way, just as a plant grows. The business of the educator is to watch and follow the natural growth, to encourage it here and to prune it there, so that it may go on in full proportion and symmetry. He mistakes his function when he sets himself to clip the growing plant into some artificial shape, by which beauty and fruitfulness are both sacrificed. How often does it happen that the young mind is thus trimmed into the likeness of a monster, instead of being trained into a stately and beautiful tree!

Let us turn now to the more special subject of education in science. The science educator has first to see that the mind of his pupil is stored with facts,—healthy food whereon mental digestion may work,—supplied in ample yet moderate quantity. By facts I mean here not merely verbal statements, but things or processes actually perceived—things seen, heard, handled, tasted, felt by the student himself. These are grateful to all young persons of any intelligence, and they constitute the real foundation of knowledge, that on which general principles and abstract truths must be built. In the science of rocks and minerals it were a vain, useless, and pedantic kind of teaching to discuss the geometrical laws of crystallization with a student who had never seen a mineral. The first thing is to see and handle the crystal and measure its angles. Then comes the desire to know the causes which produced this beautiful form, and the laws which regulate its growth. Taught in any other way, elementary science bears much the same relation to mental growth that a lecture on cookery would bear to the bodily growth of a child.

In the getting of the facts which are the raw material of education in science there is much training. There is neces-

sarily observation, educating the senses. Inseparably connected with this is that art of mental analysis by which we take apart the general conception of a complex object, examine its constituent parts one by one, and then endeavor to conceive them as a whole. To the ordinary onlooker a flower is merely a flower or little more than a patch of color, more or less beautiful or showy; but to the trained observer it is a complex mechanism, made up of several circles of parts, each having its special form, and the whole conspiring to make up the symmetry and beauty of an organism having important uses and adaptations. This training of observation and analysis is of great practical value in the ordinary business of life, independently of its scientific applications.

The collecting of facts implies also another valuable mental exercise. This is comparison. We cannot see rightly any two objects related to each other in any way without making comparisons. They may differ from or resemble each other in different degrees with reference to form, color, size, weight, hardness, and a variety of other properties. The scientific mind and the practical mind are constantly occupied in making comparisons, the results of which constitute the most valuable kind of practical knowledge, while the act of comparing develops and strengthens the power of discrimination.

Another mental exercise connected with the study of science is classification. The due ordering of degrees of resemblance and difference, not in trivial and accidental but in essential characters, not by one single character only but by the aggregate of all characters, is an invaluable power, and its exercise is at once demanded so soon as we know any considerable number of objects. Following this comes the grouping of objects in classes, orders, genera, or species, each of these groups having its logical status and its proper value relatively to other groups of the same or different rank. But for such classification the multitudinous objects in nature would become to us a mere incomprehensible muddle. With it they resolve themselves into rational order, while in the process we acquire habits of clear, orderly, systematic thought and arrangement, of the highest value both in science and in ordinary life.

These are, after all, among the lowest things in scientific

culture; for the mind of the student is next directed to the principles of causation, and to that grand idea of natural law under which we generalize phenomena. It is here, perhaps, that our science-teaching most fails; for few text-books and fewer teachers have any true grasp of natural laws and their grades and interactions in the grand unity of Nature. This is, perhaps, the principal reason why science in our times occasionally falls into disrepute, by lending itself to the service of a corrupt and shallow philosophy—a “pseudonymous gnosis” or “science falsely so called,” too common at present. We shall best understand this by looking at the other side of the question and noting how true science may connect itself with the higher interests of mankind.

Such connection appears in the mastery which science gives us over nature. It is true that much of this appears in ordinary life as mere routine and rule of thumb. But even what the multitude practise by mere tradition must have been invented long ago by some thoughtful mind, and without the continuance of such thought the practice will gradually deteriorate. New scientific facts skilfully used, scientific habits of thought brought to bear on old facts and processes, constitute the material of discovery and progress. For such work the most gifted minds must be thoroughly trained that they may take the foremost places in the march of society. It is equally necessary that the actual workers shall have such culture as may enable them intelligently to execute scientific plans and processes. It is also necessary that the general public shall have such culture that it may appreciate, sustain, and use for its ordinary purposes the new powers bestowed by scientific discovery, and that it may distinguish real invention and discovery from mere pretence. The highest special training and the most rudimentary science-teaching of the elementary schools should co-operate with reference to these utilities. The dead level of absolute stagnation, or the want of comprehension which causes the discoverer and inventor to be persecuted as a wizard, represents the lowest stage of humanity, as opposed to a progressive science supported by an intelligent community.

Science as an expositor of nature is closely connected with our perceptions of beauty and our advance in taste. Good

works of art are rare and costly, and abortions of art, hideous and depraving to taste, are too often those ordinarily presented to the eyes of men. Good works of nature, beautiful, symmetrical, harmonious, and withal perfectly adapted to their uses, are strewn around our daily paths, and are as accessible to the poorest country child as to the millionaire. What a great lever is here for the elevation of the common mind, if only we put our hands firmly upon it! We must do this; for tho a certain perception of beauty is a natural gift, it becomes so dulled by familiarity and neglect, that it is necessary to throw the light of science on the most common and the most attractive objects in order that they may be fully perceived and have their due effect upon the mind. Science effects this in two ways; first by disclosing minute and microscopic beauties not visible to the ordinary eye, and secondly by enabling us to perceive the great harmony and unity of nature. Science-training is not what it should be unless it keeps both objects in view, and accustoms its pupil to work minutely and accurately, and at the same time to rise to broad general views.

Unfortunately it cannot be affirmed of science teaching, as it exists in our institutions of learning, that it actually fulfils the utilities above sketched, and it may be well to inquire as to the reasons of this.

The time has gone by when it was supposed that science could be taught merely from books. It is now well known that it must be taught by actual seeing, working, and thinking on the part of the learner. But this may be carried out in a spirit too mechanical and slavish, and there is reason to fear that much of the experimenting and dissection of our science schools, however well it may serve some of the lower ends of science-teaching, falls infinitely short of its nobler aims. The evil of a superficial smattering of science has long been felt, but there is danger of running into the opposite extreme of cultivating petty specialties. Some broad general culture there must be before the pupil can safely be set to specialties. Again, while the evolutionists have seen and stoutly maintained the utility of science in developing the mind, the application of their own doctrine to nature has worked the other way. Those of them, more especially, who deny beauty as an object

of nature, and who scoff at design and unity, and those who insist on adapting all classification to imaginary theories of descent, are undoubtedly sapping the foundations of science education, and rendering it, so far as their influence goes, neither useful nor acceptable to the minds of men. This result seems strange, but it inevitably follows from pushing a principle beyond its just applications, and from leaving the humble study of nature in favor of a forced and artificial system. This indeed constitutes at present one of the great weaknesses of science education, and prevents, as much as anything else, its taking its true place as a means of culture. Lastly, there is, as already hinted, the extreme difficulty of securing the services of good teachers of science. Necessarily a very small minority of men possess the gifts of teaching, and when those who have these gifts are largely composed of smatterers, specialists, and rash speculators, your good science-teacher, capable like nature herself of descending to minutiae and rising to grand general views, and of making both intelligible and interesting to the student, is but one in ten thousand, and most rarely to be secured. The work has thus in most cases to be done by inferior workmen, and the only remedy seems to be the multiplication of partial teachers in large and well-endowed institutions. In the future, no doubt, as public intelligence expands and means of training improve, better teachers may be provided in larger number, but the drift for many years has been in the direction of mere specialists, of narrow teaching and of the divorce of science from those higher views of nature which connect it with the rational powers and purer sentiments of humanity.

Perhaps this is best seen in the relations of science to religion; and as no education worthy of the name can overlook the religious instincts of man, it will be a fatal defect in our science-teaching if it runs counter to spiritual truths and interests. Science seems in our time to be losing that alliance with religion which it maintained in time past, and this not merely with those low and superstitious religions which inculcate beliefs contrary to science, but with Christianity itself, which has nothing to fear from the progress of knowledge. In like manner science has been losing its attractions for religious minds, mainly

because of the coarse attacks on faith made by men whose study of nature, often very superficial, has not softened their hearts, but who have been hardened into a cold, mechanical habit of thought, in itself essentially barbarous and unscientific.

It requires little penetration to perceive that in this there is a serious loss to science itself. It is viewed with suspicion by many of the highest and best minds. Its teachers bring odium on themselves and their subject by outraging not merely religious feeling, but the sympathy which every rightly constituted mind has with nature itself. Their teaching becomes cold and repulsive to the more enthusiastic class of minds. The æsthetic and moral relations of nature are lost sight of, and it becomes a mere "subject" to be dissected, not a friend to be loved. Biology, in itself one of the most attractive and humanizing of studies, treated in accordance with the monism of Haeckel or the agnosticism of Herbert Spencer, becomes absolutely repulsive, or if not, it serves to degrade rather than to elevate; and if it were possible that such cold, mechanical, and brutal views of nature and of man could prevail in institutions of learning, it would be necessary for the safety of humanity that natural science, so taught, should be abolished as a nuisance, or even as an unnatural crime. But so long as common-sense remains to man it is impossible that monism and agnosticism can be the doctrine of more than a very few eccentric minds. Nor so long as the ideas of causation and natural law and the unity of nature remain to science, can it be separated from theism and true religion.

There is, however, in certain quarters an impression that in some way the Christian revelation as contained in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures is antagonistic to science. If one asks how or why, the answer usually exposes ignorance of the Bible or of natural science, or of both. The so-called conflict between science and religion has not been a conflict with the Bible, but with superstitions and ecclesiasticisms as hostile to the Bible as to science, or with the remains of exploded scientific views trying to uphold themselves by biblical or ecclesiastical sanctions. The Bible is really the most truthful of books as to natural facts, and the most non-committal as to theories of nature.

That there should be a revelation of God's will to man is not

scientifically improbable. Religion is a mental and moral necessity of man ; and as man is a part of nature, why should not this want be provided for as well as those arising from the instincts of other animals? It has been well said that to inquire as to the origin of religion seems as futile as to inquire as to the origin of hunger and thirst. We cannot imagine any animal to have existed without these appetites and the means of gratifying them, nor can we imagine a being gifted with consciousness and reason, and yet destitute of religious ideas and convictions.

If a revelation has been given, the analogy of nature would lead us to suppose that it would be given gradually and through human media, and that its language and style of thought would be largely those of the prophetic media. Thus we should expect just such an historical development of God's plans and requirements, distilled through human minds, as we find in the Bible. We should expect, as in the geological history of the earth, the earlier stages to be imperfect, tho good after their kind, and prophetic of and preparatory to the later.

But it may be asked, What of such doctrines as those of miracles, of prayer, of atonement, of future punishment? Are not these unreasonable and unscientific? That may depend on the manner in which we understand them, and on our own conceptions of natural law. Miracles, or "signs" as they are more properly called, are not necessarily violations of natural law. If they were, science might be excused for rejecting them. Those recorded in the Bible are rather correlations and adjustments of laws, or counteractions of lower laws by those on a higher plane. Such miracles are really a part of the ordinary course of nature, and must exist wherever life and volition exist. But as we know that science itself enables men to work miracles, absolutely impossible and unintelligible to the ignorant, we may readily believe that the Almighty can still more profoundly modify and rearrange his own laws and forces. Viewed in this way, a miracle is a most natural thing, and to be expected in any case where events great and momentous in a spiritual sense are transpiring.

A naturalist should be the last man in the world to object to the efficacy of prayer, since prayer is itself one of the most

potent of natural forces. The cry of the young raven brings its food from afar without any exertion on its part, for that cry has power to move the emotions and the muscles of the parent-bird and to overcome her own selfish appetite. The bleat of the lamb not only brings its dam to its side, but causes the secretion of milk in her udder. The cry of distress nerves men to all exertions, and to brave all dangers, and to struggle against all or any of the laws of nature that may be causing suffering or death. Nor in the case of prayer are the objects attained at all mechanically commensurate with the activities set in motion. We have all seen how the prayer of a few captives, wrongfully held in durance by some barbarous potentate, may move mighty nations and cause them to pour out millions of their treasure to send men and material of war over land and sea, to sacrifice hundreds of lives, in order that a just and proper prayer may be answered. In such a case we see how the higher law overrides the lower, and may cause even frightful suffering and loss of life, in order that a moral or spiritual end may be gained. Are we to suppose then that the only being in the universe who cannot answer prayer is that One who alone has all power at his command? The weak theology which professes to believe that prayer has merely a subjective benefit is infinitely less scientific than the action of the child who confidently appeals to a Father in heaven.

So as to such doctrines as atonement and sacrifice and punishment. We know nothing more surely than that in material nature every effect must have a sufficient cause, every action a corresponding reaction. We cannot lift a fallen child without a corresponding loss of muscle and nerve-matter and power. No good can come without precisely corresponding sacrifice. The man who denies these doctrines in the spiritual sphere might just as well deny the conservation of force in the material sphere. In the natural world every violation of natural law by sentient beings brings, sooner or later, its corresponding chastisement, and this is unending in its effects unless counteracted by some other and higher force. We may not like this, but we cannot deny it; and if there is any analogy between the natural and the spiritual world, the effect must be the same in the latter as in the former.

Nature may lead us to even more lofty analogies with reference to our relations to God. To be answered, the appeal of the suppliant must be in some measure in harmony with the constitution of the creature appealed to. The cry of the raven will evoke no answering feeling in the ox or the sheep, nor will the bleat of the lamb or the lowing of the calf affect the raven. So it may be with God. He is a Spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. The prayer of hypocrisy and selfishness must be an abomination to him, and the form of supplication without reality, of all things most nauseous in his sight. The acceptable worshipper should, to fulfil the analogy of nature, be a partaker of the divine spirit. The only point in which revelation seems to transcend nature here is in the manifestation of God as a forgiving Father, who can lend a pitying ear even to the cry of his evil and rebellious children, and receive the returning prodigal. But does not human affection offer a parallel even to this? May not the good man listen to the entreaty of his worst enemy when in distress or danger, and does not the agonized inarticulate cry of a noxious animal awaken some pity in a feeling heart? I do not mean to assert here that science could have informed us on all these subjects without revelation; but merely that when revealed they prove themselves perfectly in harmony with the analogy of nature.

These thoughts may seem to be a digression from the subject of this paper, but they are not. Education must ever keep in view the great principle that its highest object is the mental and moral elevation of the pupil, the evolution of all that is best and most noble in his powers and character. It must aim at the highest things or its result will be failure. Science education must be prepared to regard nature as a revelation of the infinite creative Mind, in the evolution of his great plans, else it will become less than nothing and mere vanity. If what is called science should ever, by a retrograde development, become 'the mere anatomizing and analyzing of material things, the mere playing with natural forces in order to astonish or excite, the mere study of mechanical powers to secure selfish ends, the means whereby we and our children are to be reduced to automata, the sports of chance or necessity, or the victims of an insensate struggle for existence—then it had better be banished

from the earth, for even the conveniences which we may obtain from its practical results would be too dearly purchased with the loss of all that development of man's higher nature which makes them really valuable.

The true teachers of science need not fear such results. Nature itself bears too strong testimony to its Maker, and is too well attuned to harmony with what is best in man, to permit science to fall so low. But the teacher must be the humble pupil of nature, the accurate and true expounder of natural facts and laws, or rather, perhaps, he must allow these facts and laws to teach themselves, and must seek to have his heart in sympathy with nature, with man, and with God. Thus will he be able to teach truly and intelligibly and attractively, and to set the highest example to all other educational workers. However science-teaching may now seem to fall short of this ideal, it should keep in view the orderly, symmetrical evolution of all the higher powers and tendencies. Thus it will earn a commanding place in education, and vindicate its claim to do all that nature can do for the elevation of humanity; and thus it will find itself, unexpectedly perhaps, in harmony alike with the material interests of humanity, with the most refined culture of taste, with the highest morality, and with the religion of Christ, while it will lose nothing, either in fact, theory, or even speculation, that is truly and distinctively its own.

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